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*Miniatura—  
The World of Tiny Things*



# MINIATURIA

*The World of Tiny Things*

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*By*

GEORGENE O'DONNELL

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*To my mother and father.*



## Foreword

More than two years ago, O. C. Lightner, publisher of *Hobbies* magazine, recognized the rapidly growing interest in miniatures and accordingly developed a section in his publication for collectors of scale models, tinies and oddities, entitled *Miniaturia*; whence the name of the present volume. Prior to that time, there was no section in any publication in the United States where miniature collectors could exchange ideas or experiences. The response to the miniature section in *Hobbies* led Mr. Lightner to ask me to write this book.

As can be seen by the chapter on the *Outline of the Origin of Miniatures*, collecting miniatures is not a modern hobby. But although rapidly growing, it is not yet represented by any association, club or society. As a result, what constitutes a miniature is still a matter of personal taste rather than being clearly determined in the case of model boats, railroads or airplanes. This accounts for great variation in collections of miniatures. Within the last decade, the scale of one inch to the foot, popularized by Mrs. Thorne's Miniature Rooms, has been generally accepted in this country; two inches to the foot, however, still remains to be the accepted scale for European miniatures, particularly in England.

New collectors and veterans in this field experience one fundamental difficulty, namely, the meaning of the word *miniatures* used to describe their tiny possessions. Until quite recently this word has been used almost exclusively to designate small paintings, so that when a collector spoke of his *miniatures*, he was apt to be thought of as a collector of small paintings or portraits.

Many volumes have been printed on miniature paintings, but I believe that this is the first book to be written on the subject of miniatures in the sense of scale models, traveler's samples, oddities and tinies. Names of collectors and sources were located with the help of Miss Pearl Reeder, editor of *Hobbies*, and, in many instances, collectors themselves furnished clues. Despite the widespread search to secure all available information, there can be little doubt that many collections are not included in this volume because the owners were unwilling to publicize their collections.



Most, if not all, miniature collectors seem to be potential authors. It is indeed unusual to find a hobbyist in this field who does not have hidden in the back of some desk drawer a few notes concerning his precious finds or his experiences with other collectors. No collector has yet found time to organize his notes; the hobby itself is too absorbing and leaves little time for other activities. Many collectors generously communicated choice anecdotes, originally intended for their own volumes, to the author of these pages who, hereby gratefully acknowledges their assistance as well as the help she received from the staffs of the museums mentioned in this book. She is indebted in a very special manner to Miss Pearl Reeder, Mr. Roy Mosoriak, Mrs. Edith M. Kaucher, Mr. J. C. Raleigh, Miss Lois Donelson, and to the staffs of the Newberry Library, Chicago, and of the Ryerson Library of the Art Institute.

G. O.

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# INTRODUCTION

## *An Outline of the Origin of Miniatures*

Through the ages, art, in its many forms, has crystallized the essence of romance and thought in human life; the vigor and power of man's artistic expression is regulated by his loftiness of soul, strength of character, and health of mind and body. With existing art relics as one of the guide posts, it has been possible to reconstruct a more intelligible pattern of the lives of the ancients. Some of the tangibles from which this pattern has been fashioned consist of what we class today as *miniatures*, a term originally applied only to painting "in little," as Pepys called miniature painting. This means of artistic expression had its origin centuries ago in decorated manuscripts.

In Egypt, the parent land of all the arts, early writings were on papyrus and generally contained capitals, headings and sometimes even a small painting of a mythological subject drawn in color, paintings known in modern times as "miniatures." The word itself is ultimately derived from the Iberian *minium*, which refers to the cinnabar imported from Spain by the Romans. It was with this substance that initial letters were usually written on manuscripts. The art of manuscript decoration was brought from the east by skillful Greek artists who had visited the court of Persia and other centers of ancient learning.

The invention of printing threatened to deprive miniaturists, calligraphers and illuminators of their means of existence. They therefore sought the cooperation of the printers who agreed to reserve corners on their printed pages for the elaborate designs of miniaturists. As the art of printing was perfected, rubrication was used less extensively and the art of the miniaturists was no longer required.

Not all art authorities agree that the skill of illuminators was turned to paintings on ivory and enamel when the need for decorated volumes disappeared. Evidence points to the fact that miniatures, as paintings, distinguished from manuscript illuminations, existed long before the Christian era. In the Boston Museum of Fine Arts is a beautiful gem portrait dating from the fifth century B.C. Such articles were worn as personal adornment; Augustus, for instance, wore a portrait of his hero,



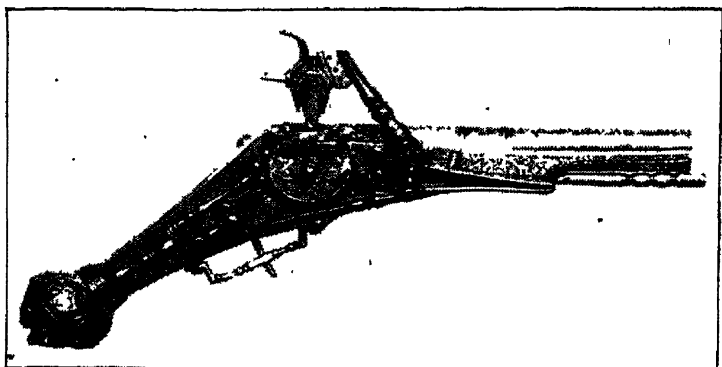
*The Alchemist Shop, Knox Hall of Civilization, Buffalo Museum of Science. Scale: approximately 1½ inches to a foot. The case is 40 inches wide and 20 inches high. The Alchemists were the predecessors of our modern laboratory workers. Primarily they were seeking a method for changing base metals into gold, but later their efforts were directed toward the discovery of a panacea for human ills,—an elixir of life.*

Alexander the Great and cultured Romans wore beautiful heads of Homer, Socrates and Demosthenes. During the thousand years which followed the fall of Rome, however, the private portrait on a tiny scale practically ceased to appear. Not until the Renaissance did the small private portrait recur, this time fashioned in bronze. Pisanello, inspired by the earlier Roman medals, began making his unsurpassed portrait medals in the forties of the fifteenth century. Cellini was also active in this branch of miniature art. But since this book is not concerned with miniature portraits, this art is mentioned only in passing.

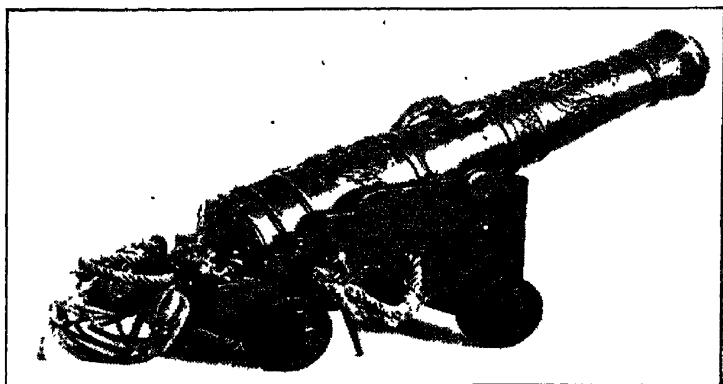
Although there is no evidence that the ancients collected miniatures as a hobby, small scale objects were used by them in observing religious customs, both in worship and the rigidly prescribed preparation of the dead for the journey into the outer world. In museums and libraries in this country as well as abroad are exhibits illustrating the uses of small scale objects in the past. The oldest metal figures yet found are in the Oriental Institute, Chicago; six copper statuettes excavated at Tell Judeideh in northern Syria, three goddesses and three gods, the deities of some Syrian state about 3200-3000 B.C. These figures are considerably larger (six to twelve inches) than a collection of bronze Egyptian statuettes, shown in the same museum, ranging in height from two to eight inches. These smaller statuettes represent Egyptian gods in different attitudes and, like the Syrian figures, were probably intended to be set up in temples for public or private worship or placed in the inner chambers of houses to protect the occupants from malignant influences.

Two pieces at the Oriental Institute which may arouse the curiosity of the miniature collector are a three inch model of a chariot found in an early dynastic temple at Tell Agrab, Iraq. Museum authorities explain that this chariot was probably set up in the temple as a votive offering to a city-god by a member of the local community. The second object, a replica of the original, may very well be termed the earliest known oddity: a gold monkey on the head of a pin, found at Ur, by C. L. Woolley of the British Museum while on a University of Pennsylvania expedition. Today, pin-head miniatures are common among the collections of hobbyists who specialize in oddities.

Miniatures and models, one of the oldest hobbies of mankind, played an important part in the preparation for the after-life of Egyptians. Into each tomb was placed mortuary equipment, rep-



*Miniature pistol.—Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.*



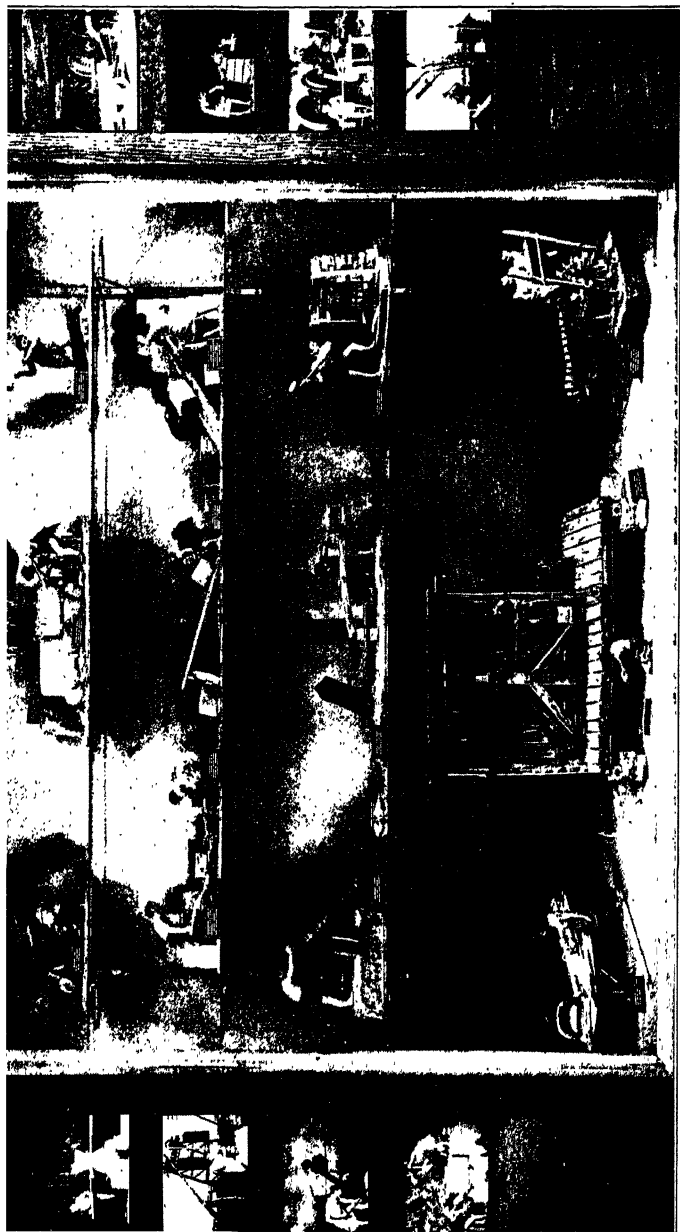
*Miniature Cannon, French, made in 18th Century. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

representations of butchers, cooks, bakers, granary attendants, sailors and boats manned by oarsmen to insure the deceased a comfortable journey to Abydos or Busiris, where he would enjoy the advantages of communion with Osiris. These miniatures or models, called *ushebtis*, appeared in the sixth dynasty as servants of the dead; they were buried with the deceased and were intended to take his place in the forced labor to which all the dead were supposed to be subjected. The word *ushebtis* is derived from *usheb*, "to answer," for these figures were supposed to possess oral power. The words of power which transformed the *ushebtis* were, "O *Ushebtis* of the Osiris is commanded to do any work whatsoever in the Neter-Khert [divine underworld]. Let all obstructions be cast down before him." The *ushebtis* was supposed to answer: "Here am I ready whensoever ye call." Then the *ushebtis* was asked: "Be ye ready to plough, sow in the fields, to fill the canals with water and to carry sand from east to west?" And the answer was again supposed to be: "Here am I whensoever ye call." If this was recited in the right tone, the figure became life-sized and ready to work, different *ushebtis* taking the place of the deceased in the various fields of labor. At first a few *ushebtis* were considered sufficient but gradually the number increased. Certain Pharaohs and noblemen had boxes of these figures buried with them, numbering sometimes as many as 365, one for each day in the year. King Seti I had seven hundred *ushebtis* buried with him in his tomb.

The size of the figures ranged from two feet in height down to one and a half inches. The custom of furnishing the tombs with mortuary equipment lasted from the sixth dynasty to the Roman period; the objects were made in alabaster, crystalline, sandstone, diorite, limestone, granite, basalt, porphyry, mud, wood, glazed faience and bronze.

This custom was not exclusively Egyptian, the Chinese had similar burial rites. Objects were buried with the dead similar to those which surrounded them in life. In very early times even members of the household were interred. During the Han dynasty (206 B.C. — 220 A.D.), models of watch towers, wells, stoves, granaries and vessels containing food, wine and incense were common, and during the T'ang dynasty (618-907) tombs of the well-to-do were furnished with retainers and domestic animals. In the Ming dynasty (1368-1643) there seems to have been a revival of the use of burial figures similar to the T'ang and sometimes mistaken for them. Metals were used to fashion this equip-





*Mechanical Power case, Knox Hall of Civilization, Buffalo Museum of Science. The scale is approximately 1 inch to a foot. The discovery and application of simple mechanical principles made possible tasks to which muscles alone were*

ment but an abundance of these objects have been found made from potters clay, evidently highly glazed when made, but now exhibiting a patina acquired only from long years of burial in the earth.

All museums showing specimens of Egyptian or Far Eastern art or archaeology have collections, varying in extensiveness, of mortuary equipment. In addition to the Oriental Institute, two other Chicago museums, the Art Institute and the Field Museum both have fine displays. In the eastern part of this country, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Fogg Museum of Art at Harvard University, the New York Historical Society, the Brooklyn Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Cincinnati Art Museum have either permanent displays or loan exhibitions of mortuary equipment.

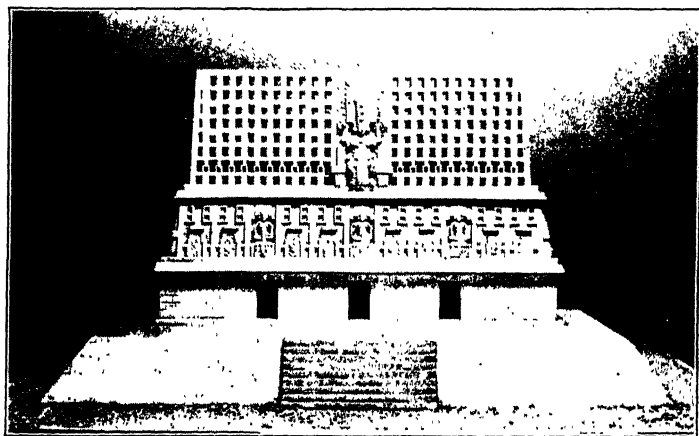
The Field Museum exhibits both Egyptian and Chinese mortuary furnishings, while the Art Institute shows almost exclusively those funeral art objects found in China. Most of the Field Museum's figures of Egyptian deities are of bronze, as few statuettes of gold and silver have escaped the rapacity of thieves. Bronze, having less intrinsic value, has been found more frequently. Figures of Osiris, Isis and Horus predominate in this collection. Lesser gods are also found: for example, *Shu*, the god of the atmosphere, whose help was valued for combating harmful earthly creatures, measures five-eighths of an inch; *Mat*, an Egyptian goddess personifying truth, measures one-half inch and is made of lapis lazuli. Some of these smaller images are perforated and were worn as rings or as amulets.

But amulets need not be an image of a deity. Strictly speaking, an amulet is anything which men tie around their neck or any other part of their body, or fasten on them in any way whatever, which they believe is invested with a kind of supernatural power, to drive off disease, to strengthen the body, or to produce certain effects of a peculiar character. For example, an Egyptian King, Nechepsus, who lived in the seventh century before the Christian era, wrote that a green jasper cut into the form of a dragon surrounded with rays, if applied externally would strengthen the organs of digestion.

Either more amulets were worn during the Egyptian civilization or a greater number of these specimens of miniature art have survived from Egypt than were prevalent in Grecian or Roman



*Equestrian armoured figure. Miniature, French, 19th Century,—style of 17th Century.  
Courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art.*



*Miniature model of Temple 33, Yaxchilan, State of Chiapas, Mexico. Maya architecture.  
Museum collection of Brooklyn Museum.*

times, since many of the museums already mentioned exhibit a larger quantity of Egyptian specimens. In both the Oriental Institute and the Field Museum are hundreds of examples of Egyptian amulets, all in varying forms: amulets to protect health, property, insure power, or guarantee numerous offspring. They represent all manner of animal life; crocodiles, rabbits, rams, apes, pigs, falcons, oxen; insects such as scarabs; and clothing, such as sandals.

In Grecian times, Theophrastus pronounced Pericles insane when he discovered that the latter wore an amulet around his neck. Greek children were bedecked with amulets which not only served as protection but also as identification after the exposure of young children, according to the law, in order to test the health and strength of the infant. In the declining years of the Roman Empire, this superstitious custom was so general that the Emperor Caracalla issued a public edict, ordaining that no man should wear any superstitious amulets about his person.

But, regardless of laws, the custom of wearing amulets never completely died out. Amulets known as fig-hands were found in Spain before the Roman conquest. Many were made in jet, as this stone from early times was thought to have magic properties which would guard its wearer from harm and cure his ills. Since it was a widespread belief that the glance of certain persons could bewitch or injure, it was a common practice to wear as protection one of these amulets, which was supposed to counteract the evil. The Hispanic Society of America in New York City has a jet amulet in the form as it was modified after the seventeenth century, when the original fig-hand shape was banned. Spanish portraits of infants in this Society's collection, painted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, show them with amulets hung at their waists.

In the Museum of the American Indian, also in New York City, the collection of amulets from all areas in the Americas, north and south, runs into many thousands. The M. H. De Young Memorial Museum in San Francisco, has many smaller objects in gold; of particular interest is the pre-Columbian jewelry, especially amulets made in the form of frogs. The Egyptians used the frog to assure numerous offspring; it is possible that this symbol was used for the same purpose on this continent.

Among the quantity of bronzes left by the ancients, almost

every period of antiquity used statuettes of this metal for votive offerings and at least in Hellenistic and Roman times, these statuettes were used for domestic ornaments and to furnish household shrines.

Purely decorative work is rare among Minoan bronzes and is comparatively poor in quality. Among the few which may have served as decoration only are a figure of a praying or dancing woman from the Troad, now in Berlin and another from Hagia Triada in the British Museum, a flute player at Leyden, and an ambitious group of a man turning a somersault over a charging bull; this last named piece is an English collection and probably served as a weight. Other smaller Mycenaean weights in the form of animals filled with lead have been found in Rhodes and Cyprus. In addition to the museums already mentioned (all of which have some bronzes) is the Freer Gallery of Art in the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., which has more than two hundred Babylonian, Egyptian and Chinese bronze miniatures.

It was for the dead, rather than for the living, that the Chinese developed their creative activity in the field of plastic arts. Statuettes were produced in bronze and other materials in quantities during the Ming period (1368-1643). From an earlier period in Chinese history, during the Ch'in dynasty (255-206 B.C.), the only sculpture now remaining are some decorative animals in bronze. Most of these are of small size and were placed on the lids of sacrificial vessels. Among the great number of wild and domestic animals represented in bronze, clay and stone during the Han period, the majority are quite small and intended to serve as feet for sacrificial vessels. Bronze was highly esteemed during three of the oldest Chinese dynasties, Hsia, Shang and Chou as it was used on all national and family occasions. Most of the relics from these periods, however, are on a scale too large to interest the miniature collector.

Vase and pitcher collectors will find interesting miniature glass collections at the Freer Gallery, Brooklyn Museum, New York Historical Society, Metropolitan Museum, the Witch House in Salem, the Hispanic Society, the Field Museum and the Oriental Institute. In the British Museum there are many beautifully carved unguent vases in alabaster as well as glass which authorities have dated about 3500 B.C. In each instance, these miniature containers were used almost exclusively for cosmetics and not originally made as small scale reproductions. Glass probably

originated in Egypt, for the earliest examples of glass work known to us come from Egyptian tombs of the fourth millennium B.C. These are merely pastes, however, worked into beads and amulets. Later, as the cosmetic art reached a higher degree in Egypt, fascinating vases were fashioned as kohl jars; the kohl used as makeup for the eyelids and lashes.

Ancient glass first attracted attention because of the beautiful iridescence which is generally its most striking feature, appealing to everyone. This brilliance of color with its many subtle variations is, however, an accidental feature not known to those for whom the glass was made, for it is the result of conditions of burial. Because of their iridescence, many pieces, originally quite plain, useful but not particularly important, have acquired a significance not foreseen by their makers. Several of the Roman cosmetic containers in the Field Museum are illustrations of this natural process; unadorned and simple in shape, they have a breathtaking beauty derived solely from their iridescence.

Among the materials buried in Chinese tombs were those fashioned of jade, following the admonition of Confucious who said that the Chinese should have jade about his person in life and in death. Their attitude toward jade is almost religious. The poet, Li Ki, wrote:

Benevolence lies in its gleaming surface  
Knowledge in its luminous quality  
Uprightness in its unyieldingness;  
Power in its harmlessness  
Purity of soul in its rarity and spotlessness  
The moral leading in the fact that it goes from  
hand to hand without being sullied.

The Chinese believed that jade was a preservative and plugged all openings in the body of a deceased person with pieces of carved jade while a carved jade cicada was placed on the tongue. Originally cicadas were made of pure white jade but long years of burial being subjected to moisture discolored some specimens until they now resemble the mixed white and off-white of a stewed chicken bone, hence are designated by the name of "chicken bone" jade. Mr. Julius Bensabott, a Chicago importer of Oriental goods, has a splendid cicada of this coloring in his jade collection. Through training and experience over a long period of years, this importer



*Saint James the Great, a miniature in  
jet. Sixteenth Century. D801 of the  
Hispanic Society of America, New  
York.*

has acquired wide knowledge of Oriental art objects, and while not a miniature collector, he has many articles in his shop which appeal to collectors, those interested in historical pieces as well as the collector of modern Oriental handicraft.

An effective exhibition of jade is in the Field Museum, Hall of Jade, where pieces of all varieties ranging from pure white, pork fat, mutton fat, chicken bone to imperial emerald green jade are displayed. The range in size of the smaller objects is from one-quarter inch square seals to toggles under twelve inches. The Freer Gallery of Art possesses a much smaller but noteworthy collection of Chinese jade miniatures representing people, animals and decorative specimens in the prevailing type of so-called "tomb jade" in shades of warm yellow, brown and white. The oldest miniature jades in this collection date from the Shang dynasty, not later, probably, than from the fourteenth century B.C.

Oriental art work found in both museums and among the collections of miniature enthusiasts are porcelains and ivory carvings. Roughly, it may be said that museum collections contain historical art in miniature porcelains and ivory whereas a large number of miniature collectors own modern copies made within the last fifty years, principally for export purposes.

Ivory has always been an important medium of expression for Chinese carvers and many exquisite examples have come down to us. The anonymous artists, however, had a greater appreciation of the intrinsic value of the material for their work than the carvers of Japan. There is abundant evidence showing that ivory was taken as a tax, brought as a tribute to China and was greatly valued in early times, next to jade. As early as 1263, a bureau for carving in ivory and rhinoceros horn was established in China with some 150 craftsmen and an official in charge. In 1680, craftsmen were brought from all over China to carve in the settlement within the Palace at Peking.

One of the most wonderful technical achievements in Chinese ivory carvings are the concentric spheres made in Canton as early as the fourteenth century and known as the "devil's work balls" or "mystery balls." Until the Japanese invasion of that city, Canton carvers were still producing these popular collectors' items. Mr. Bensabott recalls that George Ade had acquired a specimen which boasted of twenty-five inner circles, each carved in varying designs. The importer was commissioned by a friend



of Mr. Ade's, George Barr McCutcheon, to find an ivory ball which had more than twenty-five inner balls. After several trips to China, a rare specimen with twenty-seven balls was found. The difficulty in securing a large sphere with so many inner spheres comes from the fact that as the elephant tusk widens toward the animal's face, it also becomes hollow. Hence, it is necessary to secure an enormous tusk in order to fashion a ball with more than twenty inner circles.

The finest Chinese porcelains are principally in museum collections: the Art Institute of Chicago, the Brooklyn Museum, the Field Museum and others. One outstanding private collection including both porcelains and bronzes is that owned by Lady Ingram who in twenty years accumulated 170 pieces, all under five inches, with the majority measuring less than three inches.

It is generally agreed that the best porcelains come from the Yangtze river in Central China. The finest porcelains were made during the following periods: K'ang Hsi, 1662-1772, Yung Cheng, 1723-1735, and K'jeng Ling, 1736-1795. Chinese princes spent fortunes perfecting various glazes; such as, apple green, clair de lune, ox blood, peach bloom, mirror black and powder blue. The artists of this vast agricultural nation endeavored to imitate nature's colors as closely as humanly possible.

Porcelain was invented in China and that invention is acknowledged by the word "china," as its English equivalent. The shapes into which porcelain was fashioned on a miniature scale are extensive; teapots, fruits and flowers, scent bottles, rouge pots, powder boxes, saucers, flower vases, chopstick trays, and miniature wine cups. The most common variety of miniature porcelain found in miniature collections is the blue and white saucer.

Archaeologists have uncovered toys originally made for the children of the ancients; clay chariots, one of the first wheeled toys, horsemen of pottery from Cyprus, modelled and baked five centuries before Christ, and specimens of the same date from Rhodes and Sardinia. Aside from the interest of miniature collectors in historic objects in a small scale, a non-collector may also be impressed, not only with the small size and workmanship of these century-old toys, but principally with their striking similarity to toys of modern times. The Egyptian jointed jumping jack of 2,000 B.C. or a Coptic doll, are constructed along the same principles as their modern equivalents. These very early toys seem to have weathered time better than toys made

during the Middle Ages. Authorities on toy history maintain that they were made primarily of glass and because of their fragility have long since crumpled into dust. But we know that toys were prevalent during those years, for they are shown frequently in mediaeval paintings.

The first craftsman to make a profession of toy making appeared during the fifteenth century and was known as a "dockenmacher," named for the so-called "docke," a South German word for doll. This worker was one of the pioneers of the great Nuremberg toy industry which was to develop later. Also, in addition to toy-makers, there were those craftsmen who reproduced in miniature for children, the same articles which they made in life size for adults; these early workers set the pace for the present day scale object worker.

Christoph Weigel gave the following description of Nuremberg artisans in an account written in 1689: "The material from which the dolls and toys are made is sometimes silver and is finished by goldsmiths and silversmiths. Sometimes it is wood which the wood-carver finishes, and sometimes it is alabaster which the alabasterer finishes. Other toys are molded in wax and the animals and birds which are made from this same material resemble nature very closely and are covered with delicate skins and feathers. Yes, there is scarcely a craft which is ordinarily made in life size which is not reproduced in miniature."

Paul von Steven in 1765, wrote as follows: "In regard to the education of girls, it is necessary to mention toys, especially the so-called "docken-hauser" (dolls' house) with which many girls play until they are brides. Everything that belonged to the household and its maintenance was reproduced in miniature and in some cases it was carried to such extravagant lengths that one hundred gulden and more were paid for these playthings."

The court jewellers of France spent hours fashioning precious jewels and metals into miniatures for the cabinets of noblemen and ladies of the court; jewelled musical boxes, automatic watches with mechanically moving scenes and figures, and snuff and patch boxes. Although Switzerland was the birthplace of the mechanical toy, these French artisans became acquainted with the Swiss technique and created fabulous toys and miniatures fitting as



*Chinese, early T'ang, ivory dancing lady,  
height 1-11/16". No. 4-1929 Fogg Museum of  
Art. Reproduced by permission of the owner,  
Langdon Warner.*

gifts to the Empress of China, the Czar and Grand Dukes of Russia.

In England, the elder Josiah Wedgwood, and the potteries of Derby, Spode, Bristol, Swansea, Leeds and Coalport are all known to have contributed to the Lilliputian souvenirs of the past.

The Essex Institute in Salem, Massachusetts, exhibits a collection of silver toys lent by Mrs. F. C. McDuffie; also two oddities, carved cherry stones containing silver spoons, one set made in England about 1810, the second set made by Moses Joy in 1906, a duplicate of the first set. Their collections of dolls, toys and miniature furniture also include several dolls' houses with furnishings.

In addition to the fine Bonsal silver collection owned by the Philadelphia Museum of Art which is discussed in the chapter on Precious Metal Miniatures, this museum also displays a model of a Germantown house built 1765-1768; a French doll dating from 1870 with a trunk and a wardrobe containing 150 items, among which are calling cards, and skates; a Chinese Lowestoft tea set of the latter part of the eighteenth century; and two English transfer printed Staffordshire dinner sets, dating from the middle of the nineteenth century.

Among the nineteenth century objects in the collection of the Cincinnati Art Museum is a set of wicker doll furniture made and presented by Mrs. Laura Turpin; a game of jack straws, a small wooden pear-shaped box containing fifty small dishes of turned carved wood; and an English walnut shell containing small figures, also from the nineteenth century.

There are one hundred and eleven dolls in the collection of the Western Reserve Historical Society, primarily early American, fifty-five pieces of doll clothing, and twenty-five pieces of furniture, and dishes. Among the models in this historical society are five log cabins, two of which measure about two by one and a half by two inches; a model of a mowing machine, 1860; a Dodge self reaper and mower, and a model of a fire truck, 1870. In a separate case in the Children's Room is a collection of miniature animals, tools, books, powder horns, smoking pipes, cooking utensils and boots. Two model rooms taken from a Swedish manor house were shown with a Swedish exhibit on loan until the spring of 1942.

Aside from the foreign museums mentioned in the chapter on Dolls' Houses, the following, prior to the second World War, also exhibited material of interest to miniature collectors. In Paris, the Musée Carnavalet possessed an eighteenth century figure said to represent Voltaire in his study; at the Schloss Museum, Berlin, was a Nuremberg dolls' house made in the first half of the seventeenth century, showing nine rooms completely furnished; the Deutches Museum, Munich, exhibited a south German dolls' house; in Augsburg, at the Maximillian Museum, was a dolls' house of 1740 made of paper and wax. In the Centraal Museum, Utrecht, was a room patterned after the home of a Dutch nobleman about 1700; in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, an eighteenth century Dutch doll's house representing a nobleman's mansion in Amsterdam; and in the Gemeente Museum at the Hague, a dolls' house built in 1743. In the Dansk Folkemuseum, Copenhagen, Denmark, there is a milliner's shop measuring twelve inches made in 1840; and in Manchester, England, at the Manchester Art Gallery an English dolls' house of the Adam period. The most famous dolls' house in a foreign museum is, of course, that made for Queen Mary of England and formerly exhibited in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Military toys were exhibited at many German museums before the outbreak of the present war: the Bayerisches National Museum at Munich, the Germanisches Museum at Nuremberg, the Industrial Museum also at Nuremberg, the Imperial Museum in Vienna and in France, the Cluny Museum, Paris.

The largest museum collection of military miniatures known to the present writer is that owned by the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art: twenty-seven miniature pistols and guns dating from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century and measuring from one and five-eighths inches to five and one-eighth inches; five miniature French cannon of the eighteenth century, all less than one foot in length; and two miniature reproduction, French equestrian armored figures made in the middle of the nineteenth century in the style of the seventeenth century.

In addition to the large collection of Japanese pottery in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Peabody Museum at Salem was presented with a collection of one hundred and eighty-eight pieces of miniature Japanese pottery by Margaret Brooks, secretary to Edward S. Morse, who made the large collection at the Boston Museum. Although the catalog information on the

Peabody collection is incomplete, Ernest S. Dodge, curator, reports that there are specimens from most of the Japanese provinces and that the majority of pieces are early nineteenth century, although there are a few seventeenth and eighteenth century items.

Colonel and Mrs. Fain White King of Wickliffe, Kentucky, have been operating an early American Indian museum for several years and point out that among the three thousand pieces discovered by them in the mounds of western Kentucky, southern Illinois, Tennessee and Missouri, are many specimens to interest miniature enthusiasts. Their most unusual specimens are two hundred pieces of flint or flint fashioned into miniature human and animal shapes.

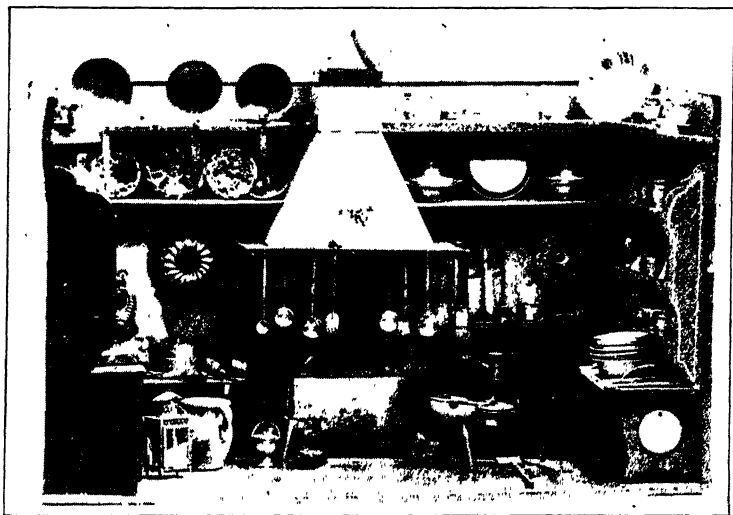
In Phoenix, Arizona, the Heard Museum has two hundred Pima miniature baskets made by the Pima Indians of the Salt River Valley, Arizona. The baskets range from four inches to one-quarter inch in diameter and are made of willow and *martyria* (devil's horn) in coil weave. So far as A. W. Brame, the curator of this museum has been able to determine, these baskets have no religious significance and are just an art development among the older women of the tribe. Members of the Heard family collected the specimens over a period of years, and some of the baskets date back fifty years.

One outstanding exponent of the use of scale models to tell a comprehensive story of civilization is the Buffalo Museum of Science. Several other museums use dioramas, notably the Museum of the City of New York and the Chicago Historical Society, but the Buffalo Museum, covering an acre of land and having only four floors, has adopted the use of miniatures and scale objects throughout its exhibits. This museum is arranged like a book with each exhibit hall a separate chapter complete in itself. All the halls taken together tell the entire fascinating story of science in natural sequence, beginning with the constitution of matter and ending with civilization.

For many years, scale models have been utilized for instructional purposes by schools, railway companies, technical colleges, physical laboratories, and governmental agencies, such as the war and navy departments. Architects have also made extensive use of scale models for housing details, town planning, suggestions for extensions to factories, laying out of estates

and rearrangement of transportation facilities. Annual exhibitions of model makers were held in London where amateur-made models were entered for competition. The commercial production of models has been mainly located in the United States, England and Germany, although thousands of varieties of miniatures, not necessarily models, have been imported to this country from Mexico, China, Japan and India.

Volumes and articles on painting, arts and crafts, and customs have yielded little more than a sketchy history of the origin of miniatures. A more complete story on this subject might be developed by studying museum pieces in those institutions mentioned in this chapter. One point is clear. Miniature collecting, as it exists today, may be a modern hobby but the veneration of objects "in little" stems from antiquity.



*Toy kitchen, equipped with pewter, brass, copper, iron, pottery, glass and wood utensils. Height, 17"; width, 29"; depth, 13-7/8". American. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

# BENVENUTO CELLINI

Of all workers in miniature, perhaps the best known by tradition is the swashbuckling Florentine, Benvenuto Cellini, who during his amazingly active life which began in 1500, found time to create "masterpieces," (according to his own description), few of which have survived. Small works in sculpture left in his studio at Cellini's death, listed in an inventory made in February, 1571, were in wax and bronze. In the wax medium they included four figures: *Cleopatra*, *Silence*, *Our Lady* and *Perseus*; in bronze, two statuettes of *Perseus*, one of *Ganymede*, and one of *Pluto*.

Although Cellini obviously preferred to be remembered as a sculptor rather than a goldsmith, his success in the larger medium was doubtful. In his uninhibited *Autobiography*, this prince of egotists expounds: "I said many times that the world and all Italy knew very well that I was an excellent goldsmith; but that Italy had never seen works by my hand in sculpture. And throughout the profession certain furious sculptors, ridiculing me, called me, 'the new sculptor'; to whom I hoped to demonstrate I was an old sculptor if God should afford me sufficient grace to be able to exhibit my completed Perseus in that noble Piazza of His Most Illustrious Excellency."

This ambitious statue was completed and exhibited but severely criticized. Even today, modern artists have pointed out that contrary to the traditions of later Florentine design, the hero's body is too thick, his limbs too coarse and his head too large for statuesque dignity, whereas the small wax model of Perseus made by Cellini and now preserved among several precious relics of like sort in the Palazzo del Bargello, exhibits the same figure with longer and slimmer proportions.

From Cellini's early childhood he showed interest in work on a small scale as he willingly made clay models rather than play on the flute, although it is questionable that his dislike of music practice drove him to modelling. As was the case with nearly all the greatest Florentine artists before him, sculptors, painters, architects and engravers, he was put at an early age to the goldsmith's trade, then the epitome of all the plastic arts. During his apprenticeship, he did not merely learn how to work in precious metals and to set jewels but he also became acquainted with the mysteries of the foundry, methods of handling iron, secrets of chiselling steel and casting dies. He had to make himself an



expert draughtsman, to study anatomy to model from the nude, and to acquire familiarity with antique masterpieces. Enamelling and niello formed special branches of his training; nor could architecture be neglected, because he was often called upon to fashion tabernacles and to execute large works in gold or silver which resembled buildings by their intricacy and design. He gained further insight into numerous subordinate processes such as modelling in wax or stucco, baking terra-cotta, and preparing foils for gems. As long as he remained a goldsmith, he was forced to work in miniature. He continued to be a goldsmith in the strict sense of that term until he was forty years old. His many technical accomplishments were employed chiefly in producing articles of plate, costly furniture and jewelry. As for the jewelry, changes in fashion were more responsible for its disappearance than the crucibles of thieves or the financial straits of princes.

In the several versions of the *Autobiography*, Cellini makes frequent reference to his jewelry making: "It chanced at that time that I lighted upon some jars or little antique urns filled with ashes and among the ashes were some iron rings inlaid with gold (for the ancients also used that art), and in each of the rings was set a tiny cameo of shell. On applying to men of learning, they told me that these rings were worn as amulets by folks desirous of abiding with mind unshaken in any extraordinary circumstance, whether of good or evil fortune. Hereupon, at the request of certain noblemen who were my friends, I undertook to fabricate some trifling rings of this kind; but I made them of refined steel and after they had been well engraved and inlaid with gold, they produced a very beautiful effect; and sometimes a single ring brought me more than forty crowns, merely in payment for my labour."

In describing a ring made for the wife of a patron he says: "The ring was for the little finger of the hand; so I made four tiny cherubs in relief with four small masks which formed the said little ring, and I also inserted some fruit and enamelled settings, so that the precious stone and the ring together exhibited a very beautiful effect" Cellini was not above placing a high opinion on his works of art.

It was the custom during that epoch to wear golden medals, usually on the cap or hat, upon which every nobleman or man of quality had some device of his own fancy engraved. Cellini made

quantities of such medals and confides to his readers that he found them extremely difficult to work. He considered himself the expert medallist of his day, or any other day for that matter, and in relating the story of his astounding genius in this branch of work, he says: "At that time there arrived in Florence, a Sienese, called Girolamo Marretti, who had lived long in Turkey and was a man of lively intellect. He came to my shop and commissioned me to make a golden medal to be worn in the hat. The subject was to be Hercules wrenching the lion's mouth . . . I had spent infinite pains upon the design, so that the attitude of the figure and the fierce passion of the beast were executed in quite a different style from that of any craftsman who had hitherto attempted such groups." In making a medal for a Frederigo Ginori, Cellini mentions that he first made a model in wax then worked on the actual medal designed to show Atlas bearing the world on his shoulders.

It is evident that Cellini must have made designs and preparatory sketches for most of his works although his contemporaries spoke of him as an artist who had "no need to make use of the drawings of others" in carrying out his commissions. That he worked first in wax is certain, not only by wax miniatures extant but also by descriptions in his *autobiography*: "I took the 500 scudi and went to Paris into an apartment belonging to the Cardinal of Ferrara, and there I began in the name of God, to work, and I made four small models in wax, two-thirds of a braccio a piece, — Jove, Juno, Apollo, Vulcan. At this juncture, the King came to Paris; wherefore I immediately went to see him and I carried the said models with me, along with those two youths of mine, that is to say, Ascanio and Pagolo . . . I saw that the King was satisfied with the said models, and he directed me to make Jove as the first in silver of the stated height . . ."

In effect, these wax models were Cellini's samples, the fifteenth century version of what may be in our day a photograph, a scale drawing or a blueprint.

The work about which there grew the greatest controversy was the famous salt-cellar. This, too, was first fashioned in wax. He relates: . . . "I set aside certain hours of the day, and worked therein upon the salt-cellar, and sometimes upon the [statue of] Jove. Since the Salt-Cellar was worked upon by many more men than I, I had sufficient convenience for to work upon the Jove, by this time I had completely finished it. The King had

returned to Paris, and I went to see him, carrying with me the completed Salt-Cellar; which as I have said . . . was oval in shape, and was of the size of about two-thirds of a braccio, all of gold chased with the aid of a chisel."

Since the wealth of an individual of Cellini's day was gauged by the elaborate design of his salt-cellar, this craftsman held no rein on his vivid imagination in creating a design fit for the King of France, Francis I. He represented the sea and the earth by the figures of a man and a woman in a "charming attitude" with their legs intertwined, signifying that arms of the sea run up into the earth and the earth juts out into the sea. In the right hand of the male figure he fixed a trident and in his left was placed a boat; delicately chased, in which the salt was to be placed. Beneath the figures, around the base are four sea horses, four golden figures representing night, day, twilight and dawn and symbols representing the four chief winds. The finished metal Salt-Cellar, when last heard of before the war, was in the Imperial Treasury in Vienna; the wax model from which the original was made has disappeared.

As much effort was expended by this artist in perfecting wax models as in completing the finished work and in some cases the model was superior, inasmuch as Cellini seemed better fitted to work on a small scale. For example, there is the wax model of Perseus preserved in the Museo Nazionale in the Florentine Bargello which is acknowledged to do far more credit to the genius of Cellini than the more ambitious statue of Perseus in the Piazza della Signoria. This model is no doubt the one referred to when Cellini says: "I gladly set myself to make the said model (for the Duke Cosimo I de' Medici) and in a few weeks I had completed it of the height of about a braccio. It was of yellow wax, very suitably finished; it was excellently executed with very great care and skill." With that statement, art critics seems to find little quarrel. But with his narrative concerning the small model of Neptune, Cellini is once again the braggart: . . . "They saw my small model of Neptune, and of the fountain, which the Duchess had never seen before that time. And it achieved so much power in the eyes of the Duchess that she at once raised a cry of indescribable astonishment and turning to the Duke she said: "In the course of my life I have never imagined anything a tenth part of such beauty." At these words the Duke kept saying many times: 'Oh! Did I not tell you so?' And so amongst themselves they discoursed about it for some time to my great credit."

The aim of Cellini's work seems to have been either "splendid" or "exquisite" rather than be graceful or delicate. To many artists there is a want of refinement in his overcrowded detail, a want of repose in the constraint of his postures, a want of modesty, order and proportion in the attenuation of some of his figures and in the heavy clumsiness of others. As for his famous *Autobiography*, the writing has been analyzed by one wag as fifty percent of the truthfulness of a story-teller, twenty-five percent, a gossipy letter writer, fifteen percent, the thoughts of a man with a grievance, and ten percent, the expression of a deliberate liar with a morbid and malignant character. Yet in the opinion of Horace Walpole, the book is more amusing than a novel and surpasses other literature for the delight it affords the reader. Some authorities consider that Cellini's pen surpassed his chisel, just as Vasari's book is immeasurably superior to his works of art. Despite all criticism Cellini cannot be crowded from his place as a master-worker in miniature. He has alternately been branded a murderer, thief and a counterfeiter; more lenient judges of his moral character have described him as a devout Catholic who made bad use of his free will, but withal he was an artist of no mean accomplishment. In the whole history of art, no period was of greater interest than his own. He lived in the days of Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci; among his acquaintances was Titian, among his friends was Michael Angelo. Crumbs of praise from this great master spurred Cellini on to greater efforts. In his Treatises, he relates, "I once fashioned a medal for a certain Giorlamo Marretti, a Siense; and on this medal was a Hercules rending the jaws of the lion. Both Hercules and lion had I wrought in such high relief that they only just touched the background by means of the tiniest attachments . . . and brought to such a height of delicacy and finish of design that our mighty Michael Angelo himself came to my very workshop to see it, and when he had looked at it a minute or so, he in order to encourage me, said: 'If this work were made in great, whether of marble or of bronze, and fashioned with as exquisite design as this, it would astonish the world and even in its present size it seems to me so beautiful that I do not think ever a goldsmith of the ancient world fashioned aught to come up to it!' These words stiffened me up just, and gave me the greatest longing to work, not only in the smaller things but to try larger things also. For, thought I, words such as these, coming from so great a man, can but have the following meaning: Had the figures been tried on a large scale I should not have produced them with near such beauty as on a small . . ."

The volume from which this last quotation was taken is entitled, *The Treatises of Benvenuto Cellini on Goldsmithing and Sculpture*. Chapter twelve, which should interest many collectors, concerns what Cellini designates as *Minuterie Work*, giving Cellini's own description of his methods of working on small scale objects.

## Chapter I

### *Two Deans of Miniaturia*

NORWORTH AND CHARBNEAU

JACK NORWORTH

During his varied life, vaudeville, musical comedies and song writing have successively claimed the attention of Jack Norworth, but aside from his profession as an entertainer, the one interest having the strongest continuous appeal over a period of years is miniatures. More than 30,000 Lilliputian objects make up what he appropriately calls, "It's a Small World."

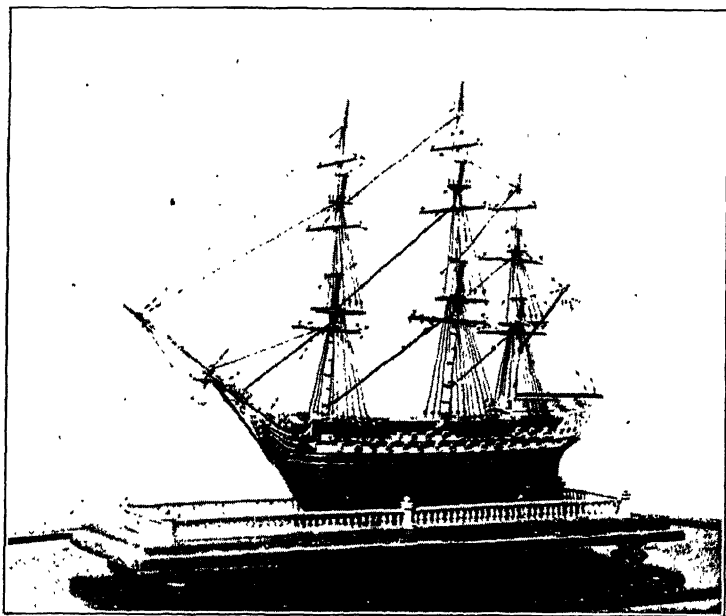
Whether the perennial popularity of his favorite song, *Shine on Harvest Moon*, pleases Mr. Norworth as much as acquiring a long sought after minute treasure, it is difficult to say. That question can be placed in the same category with the hen and egg query because the existence of one depends so entirely on the other. If he had not been a successful composer, less money for collecting would have been available. He has composed 3,000 songs, but he is the first one to add, "seven of them were good," *Shine on Harvest Moon, Take Me Out to the Ball Game, When it's Apple Blossom Time in Normandy, Smarty, Come Along My Mandy, Garden of Sweden and Over on the Jersey Side.*

Today, Jack Norworth spends less and less time composing and acting and more time with his miniatures. Throughout his years in the theater he constantly added to his collection. Just a few steps away from the odor of grease paint and the glare of footlights, his conversation invariably leads to a discussion of miniatures, in general, and his Lilliputian realm in particular. The one object which he prizes above all others is his four and one half inch model of Lord Nelson's *Victory* made by a French prisoner of war.

From 1793 until Napoleon's defeat in 1815, thousands of French fighting men were imprisoned in England. The most noted of all detention prisons during this period was Norman Cross

barracks not far from Peterborough, England. In 1797, four years after France declared war against Great Britain, Norman Cross received its first contingent of prisoners. Longing for their homeland and with time weighing heavily, many Frenchmen began to carve objects from the English beef bone served to them in stews. This pastime later developed into a thriving business with market days held on prison grounds where patrons from the countryside came to buy. Soldiers carved military figures or equipment and sailors carved their ships and objects pertaining to the navy. It was here at Norman Cross that Norworth's treasured ship was made.

Several years before the first World War, while playing an engagement in London, Mr. Norworth visited the Victoria and



*"This is the prize of my collection," says Norworth of the model of Lord Nelson's "Victory" made by a French prisoner of war about 1790, at Norman Cross, England. It is only about four and one-half inches over all. Upper rigging is human hair and in some cases the hair is split to keep it in proportion.*

Albert Museum and there discovered this delicate masterpiece, assuming that it was the property of the museum. He learned, however, that the ship was lent for exhibition by an Englishman, to whom he wrote asking the price. In his courteous reply, the artist owner admitted that he was "sorely tempted to part with his ship as he could well understand Mr. Norworth's love of craftsmanship on a small scale;" but, he went on to say, he had reluctantly allowed the Victoria and Albert Museum to borrow the ship from his collection for exhibition purposes and at that time he did not wish to sell. Despite this refusal Mr. Norworth kept writing to the ship's owner, gracefully omitting direct reference to the model. His purpose was to make his whereabouts known should the owner change his mind.

Mr. Norworth left England for a tour of this country shortly before the United States entered the first World War. While playing an engagement in the Middle West, he received a letter from England explaining that the war years had made drastic changes in the owner's financial situation and that now he would sell the ship. A few weeks later, after careful packing, box within box, the ship left England and was on its way to assume the starring role in Norworth's collection. Despite precautions, cork linings and layers of cotton batting to absorb shock in handling, the minute vessel was damaged during the ocean voyage and overland trip. Although the injuries were slight, it took months to restore the model. The ship model worker commissioned by Mr. Norworth found it impossible to work more than two or three hours daily: handling the rigging was almost without equal in its demands for a clear eye and steady hand. Portions of the rigging had originally been made of split hairs in keeping with the scale. Some of the ship's fittings are so small that the repairer found it necessary to scrub his hands with pumice and sandpaper his fingertips in order to handle the diminutive parts. But with infinite patience the pieces finally found their proper place. With rigging no longer askew and every peg, ring and cleat restored, the little model stood in all its perfection, anchored firmly to its hand carved wooden stand.

Several other vessels of praiseworthy workmanship are included in the Norworth collection. While playing at the London Coliseum, he received reports that fine ship models were being brought to London by sailors fresh from the long voyage home; these sailors, after spending their cruise money, were squandering



their finely-wrought art, on a barter basis, to local bartenders. Mr. Norworth contrived a workable scheme to acquire these miniatures. By arrangements with a paid attendant, he opened a shop bearing the modest sign, "Ship Models Bought and Sold." Norworth never appeared in the store nor was his name used in any way. But models from his own collection were sparingly displayed as decoys behind glass cases. When customers appeared to buy, outrageous prices were quoted, but it was another matter should a client wish to sell, the attendant would say, "We will take your model on consignment," and the ship was put aside for the shop owner's inspection. If its craftsmanship met his rigid demands, the ship became part of his collection.

Although Mr. Norworth's other miniatures are not as important to him as his favorite ship model, other collectors, not so enthusiastic about nautical miniatures, find other interesting objects among the 30,000 to which he lays claim. Among them are a crocheted tea set, a matchstickcarved into a chain, a trylon and perisphere cut from a grain of rice, a bust of Jack Norworth which fits into a willi-willi seed, a crystal radio on the head of a pin which picks up stations fifteen miles distant, an elephant carved from a human tooth, and a tiny electric razor. His miniature book collection contains only volumes one inch square or smaller. The assortment includes Shakespeare, the Bible, a set of the Harvard classics, a volume of Norworth's best known song lyrics, almanacs, hymnals, nursery rhymes and a family album. Among the books is one 1818 French almanac presented by Sir James Barrie. The boot and shoe department represents styles of footgear worn in various countries; wooden shoes from Holland, the Orient, beaded Indian moccasins, roller and ice skates, high-topped cowboy boots, and fur lined boots like those worn in Greenland and Arctic regions. The largest objects are a pair of rubber boots measuring about two inches long.

His most talked-about miniature room is a reproduction of an American taproom of the 1890's. The model, a foot and a half long by ten inches wide, is complete in its furnishings, even to the sawdust on the floor and the old-fashioned telephone receiver mounted on the wall. All bottles on the bar and on the shelves contain genuine liquors. Besides the taproom, visitors also admire the royal coach carved from a peach stone, a catcher's mitt and baseball, his movie camera, less than one inch square, which takes pictures and a toy cannon three-quarters of an inch long.

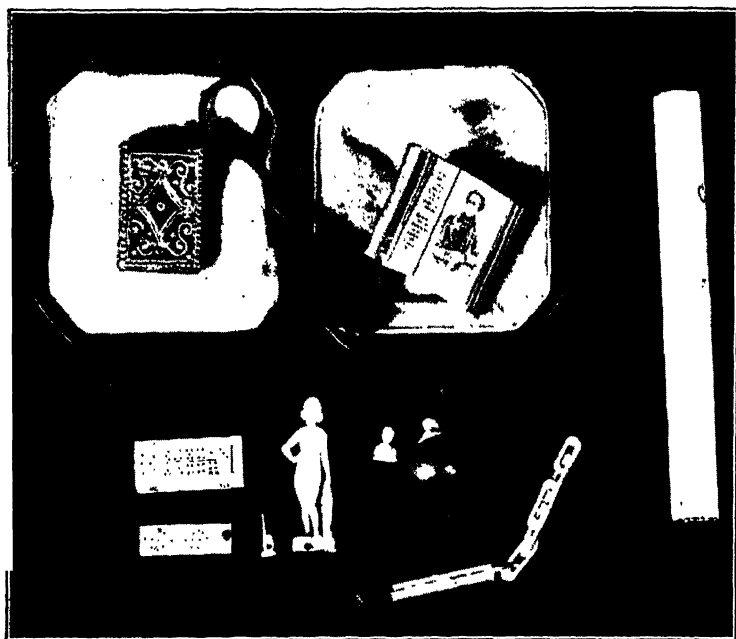
In his armory is a tiny ivory handled gun which was given to Jack Norworth's father by William (Buffalo Bill) Cody. For several summers, Mr. Norworth, senior was treasurer with the Buffalo Bill show during its travels in the United States during the 1890's and early 1900's. One of the cowboys in the show made an exact copy of Buffalo Bill's favorite gun and presented it to his employer. Cody gave it to his treasurer, when he heard of the collection.

Jack Norworth's father had become intrigued with the 'world in miniature' in the early 1870's and the father, like his son, traveled thousands of miles, earning his living and tracing clues pointing to rare finds, which he added to the special suitcase housing the nucleus of the Norworth collection. The one-time circus man settled down and Mr. and Mrs. Norworth made their home in Brooklyn, but he continued to collect miniatures, living for the day when his son could carry on his hobby.

Early in his school days, young Jack proved to be something of a problem child, causing his parents anxious moments as a result of his pranks. In an effort to discipline him, and to prevent what looked like the budding of an actor, his father arranged for him to be made a crew member on a merchant marine training ship. He sailed for six years, finally attaining the rank of quartermaster.

During those six years, he flitted from one port to another in Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia. After each voyage, his feet once again pounding the pavement of Manhattan Island, he headed straight for home where his father waited anxiously, wondering what miniature specimens had traveled in Norworth's vest pocket half way across the globe. Eager to wring every ounce of suspense from the situation, the young sailor made it his custom to finish his first home cooked meal before talking business with his father. The more plentiful the dinner courses, the more the elder Norworth fidgeted until his son showed him the treasures from overseas; Buddhas carved from half a grain of rice, camels small enough to pass through a needle's eye, olive nut carvings, or feather-weight porcelains.

Assisting his father, the son was initiated into the mysteries of collecting, and bitten by the bug that attacks all hobbyists, the young Norworth soon found it no chore but a challenge to search for rare miniatures. With each year, he became a more fervent collector.



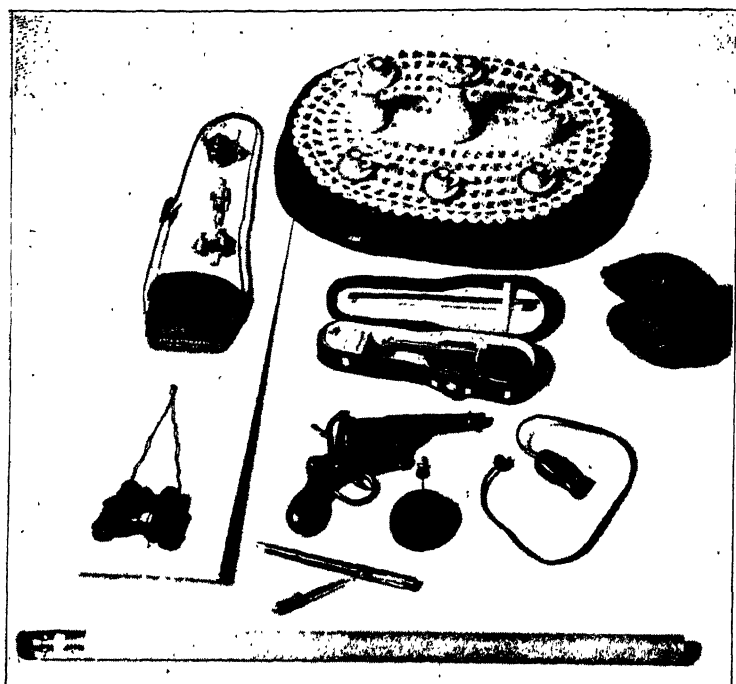
*Upper left: French Bijou Almanac 1820, set in leather case with tiny magnifying glass and tooled leather cover, one of many steel engravings showing. Lower left: Set of Dominoes (Mexican); Trylon and Perisphere cut from grain of rice; Ivory Figure; Bust of Jack Norworth fits in willi-willi seed (India); Ordinary wooden match, chain whittled at end. Regular size cigarette shown for comparison of sizes.*

The foreign dealers whom he came to know personally all over the world have since assisted him in his search for the unusual on a small scale. Let some fine piece find itself into the markets of the world and, shortly, one of Norworth's "spies," as he jokingly calls them, sends word to the "home office," Brooklyn.

Several years ago, one of his friends, traveling in China, purchased for him a menagerie of minute embroidered mammals, lions, tigers, zebras and other jungle animals. Somewhat out of place among the more dangerous carnivores is a tiny mouse, embroidered of gray silk, small enough to be lost in a floor crack. It seems that the art of making these tiny animals was a secret passed down, from one generation to another, among the members of one family who lived in a village directly in the path of the Nipponese military machine. During one of the successful Japanese drives, the invaders blasted the town off the face of the earth and butchered the inhabitants. Presumably, this secret art died with the murdered Chinese family.

Mr. Norworth counts among his examples of crocheted miniatures a basket, scarcely larger than a pencil eraser, filled with fruit of authentic shading, bananas, apples, peaches, strawberries and papayas. A tea set with cups, saucers and utensils, all crocheted is another of his prizes. A nimble-fingered Mexican woman, discovered by one of Norworth's friends south of the border, was commissioned to do his work. In the midst of an ambitious undertaking, a complete white dining table set, her eyes began to fail. With little warning, her sight was gone forever. In an effort to help the family along, Mr. Norworth offered to buy the uncompleted dinner set but for sentimental reasons the daughter refused.

Among the well known Americans with whom Norworth has had contact in his search for miniatures were "Diamond" Jim Brady, Lillian Russell, Stephen Leacock, W. C. Fields and William A. Pinkerton. A teapot hammered from a single copper penny by a prisoner in a Massachusetts prison cell was the gift of the great detective, Pinkerton, who never missed a Norworth first night. Caroline Wells, the novelist, gave him a set of tiny cocktail glasses and shaker; the famous English author, Sir James Barrie, gave Norworth a Royal Derby tea set. This was presented in appreciation of the actor's performance in *Rosie Rapture*, a musical comedy written by Barrie and produced in London. Lillian Russell's gift to him was a Chinese love boat with movable doors and figurines carved from an olive seed, presented in 1910.



Upper left: Leather case for binoculars shown below. Inside strap top teapot hammered from copper penny. Two joined wooden dolls. Top center crocheted tea set, done by Mexican lady over 80 years old. Table cloth is only four inches long. To right of tea set is Chinese love boat, carved from giant olive seed. Center, violin made by Philadelphia school boy. Hand made old time Colts revolver, presented to his father over fifty years ago by Buffalo Bill. To right of gun is electric razor. It works. Below gun is crystal set on head of a pin. It will pick up stations at fifteen miles distance. Below is Waterman fountain pen; practical. Holds one drop of ink. Pencil to show size of articles.

This collector rarely draws a breath without some word about miniaturia. Backstage of the Great Northern Theatre in Chicago in November, 1941, after the last curtain a nightly gathering was held of the Norworth "operatives" in the middle western area, reporting on their findings. During the Chicago run of his play, his constant miniature companion was a pair of dice. Other implements used in games of chance had been left in Brooklyn. Among his collection, every well known modern deck of cards, as well as older rare decks, are reproduced.

During the summer of 1941, the entire Norworth collection was exhibited at Coney Island. Friends asked him why of all things he "operated a concession at Coney Island." He had a ready answer: "An actor has to eat. With the theatre in the summer doldrums and the song publishers feuding with the broadcasters, thus affecting the royalties from my songs, there's an opportunity to share my hobby with others. It's nothing to be ashamed of. It's show business. Not only entertaining but instructive. My only regret is that I didn't have some space at the 1940 New York World's Fair."

While the concession was operating, Mr. Norworth was not content merely to sit in his office, count the house and reflect upon his glamorous past as a light-hearted singer of sentimental songs. He took his turn at the cashier's window, relieved the barkers occasionally, acted as a guide, took candid camera shots of his patrons and renewed acquaintances with old time vaudeville fans.

Mr. Norworth has a fixed rule for those who would start a collection. "Save anything and watch it grow" is the way he puts it. One of his latest interest is in the button field, miniature paper weight buttons.

In his comfortable apartment on Shore Road in Brooklyn, where he can watch ships move in and out of the Bay and get a sea view of the Harvest Moon, more miniatures will find their home. His boundless enthusiasm keeps him healthy and happy and forever searching for some treasure which may have escaped his attention.



*A gem of the Charbneau Collection, a piano that plays, held between the fingers of a lady's hand.*

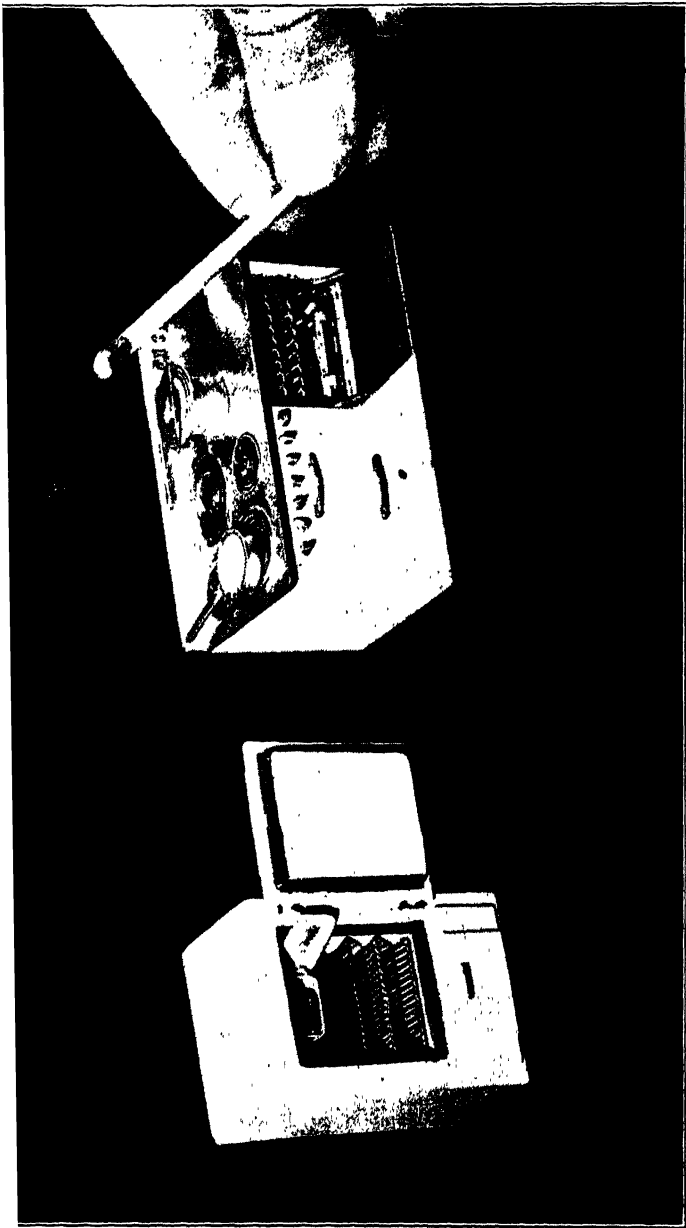
## JULES CHARBNEAU

In the year 1900, a seventeen year old boy, Jules Charbneau stepped off the gangplank of the United States Flagship *Monongahela*, and, with his two companion apprentice seamen, boarded a train for Paris. They were on their way to the famous Exposition of 1900 to see the examples of handicraft from the world's far places gathered for display in Europe's gayest capitol. The money for his trip had been earned by acting as librarian at the U. S. Naval Training Station at Newport, Rhode Island; from his pay as an apprentice seaman fourth class; from the profits of selling candy and stamps to his fellow seamen during the hours the station canteen was closed; finally from lending some of his capital to friends who repaid it with interest.

His four purchases at the Exposition were a jeweled bird, a small meerschaum pipe, a ruby cross and a church medal. The medal came from a church goods shop near the Louvre in Paris. The meerschaum pipe had attracted the eye of the young traveler as he looked at an exhibition of amber and meerschaum pipes within the Exposition grounds. Young Charbneau made the acquaintance of a fellow American touring the Exposition and purchased the jeweled bird from him. The American was a collector and had bought the small bird for his own collection but he was induced to part with it. This half inch high object is ornamented with a pearl, pigeon blood rubies and diamonds. All four pieces, formed the nucleus around which 28,000 miniatures have been gathered. Since his first purchases of miniatures in 1900, for more than forty years, Mr. Charbneau has devoted most of his spare time to his hobby and more recently, he has made it his life work.

All the 28,000 pieces can be packed into a trunk and a small suitcase, the contents of which are insured for several thousands of dollars. An armed detective accompanies Mr. and Mrs. Charbneau and their daughter, Isabella, whenever the collection is removed from the San Francisco bank vault for exhibition in connection with Mr. Charbneau's lecture, "Around the World in Miniature." The title of the lecture is a fitting description as most of his objects were collected during four world cruises. He collected coins and bank notes as well as miniatures during his first trip around the world with the Navy. In Colombo, he found a small ivory elephant, several gems, such as opals, cat's eyes, pearls and sapphires. In every port, he visited, Algiers, Port Said,





*Charbneat's pride, a miniature cook stove and refrigerator with a match held up for comparison, both devices operating.*

Alexandria, Colombo, Singapore, Zuambago, Manila, Hong Kong, Nagasaki, Yokahama and Vladisvostock, he purchased small pairs of shoes similar to those worn in each country. In the Philippines, he gathered wood carvings; in Hong Kong, needle work and rice paper pictures.

He spent all his salary to acquire a collection. In order to have more funds available, he established a business on board ship, selling post cards to officers and the crew. When the flagship, U. S. S. *New York* docked at Yokohama, the young sailor was ready to take a three day trip in the interior. Although exhausted from lack of sleep, he was eager to spend the twenty-nine dollars he had earned the twenty-four preceding hours by scrubbing ditty bags and hammocks. Fourteen dollars of the amount was paid for two pairs of miniature cloisonne and satsuma vases.

At Uraga, a monument was unveiled by the Japanese commemorating the landing of Commodore Perry. Three hundred ships of all nations were gathered in Yokouska Harbor. At a given signal all ships fired a twenty-one gun salute. It was an impressive occasion, one which the young seaman never forgot. Souvenirs were sold by the Japanese at the monument and a small bronze turtle purchased during shore leave is still in the Charbneau collection.

After his return to the United States, on his twenty-first birthday, October 20, 1904, he and Carolyn Ellen Standley were married in Seattle, Washington. The bride was the daughter of Joseph E. (Daddy) Standley, owner of the famous "Ye Olde Curiosity Shop" on the Coleman Dock in Seattle. Among the thousands of curios in the shop were ivory, horn and wood miniatures which Mr. Standley acquired through traders and sailors returning from Alaska, Siberia and the Far East. An authority on ivory carvings, he taught his son-in-law the art of distinguishing superior craftsmanship and genuine ivory.

Although his extensive travels were over for several decades, Mr. Charbneau maintained his interest in his hobby and continued to add to his collection. Twenty-eight years later, in 1932, Mr. and Mrs. Charbneau sailed from San Francisco on a six months' world cruise for the express purpose of finding more miniatures. In Hawaii, they purchased koa nutwood carvings and sea shell oddities. At Kyoto, they added more shoes and a miniature bamboo house; at Kobe, small vases were bought. During their travels through Japan, they heard of rice carvings, Buddhas made

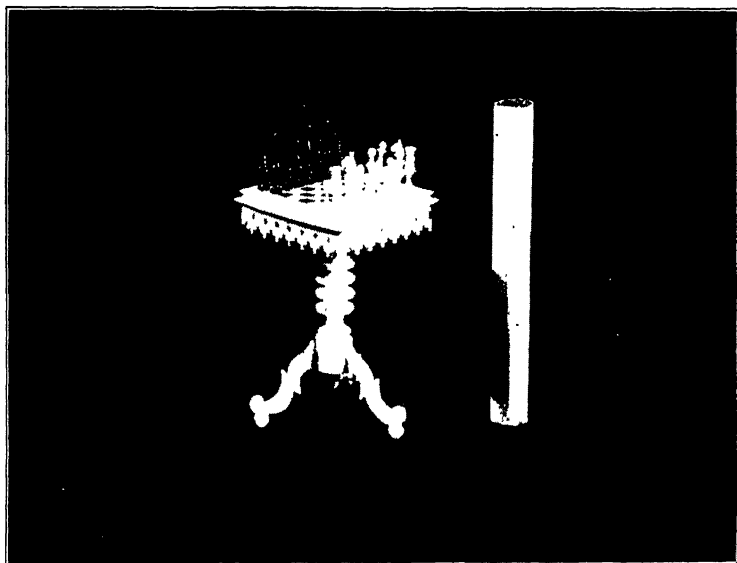
from single grains of rice; their guide learned that Nikko, a town eighty miles north of Tokio, was the center of this industry. They went to Nikko and purchased several fine specimens of this painstaking art. Across the East China Sea to Shanghai, the two travelers sailed, eager to explore the markets in China. In Shanghai, Mr. Charbneau recalls, he bought an olive nut carved in the shape of a junk, showing a crew and passengers numbering thirty-two figures. In Canton, in a less accessible market place, he saw a piece similar in every respect which he purchased for half the price paid in Shanghai. Also in Canton, once the ivory carving center of all China, he found an ivory ball with nine inner balls, all carved in different designs and each movable. In Peking, the Charbneaus found a set of cast iron musical balls, one inch in diameter, and said to be one hundred and fifty years old. The secret of their manufacture has been lost, but beside being decorative, these musical balls also had a practical use: to keep their hands nimble and strong doctors, dentists, teachers, artists and writers exercise their fingers with these balls. This exercise was useful for dentists especially. Chinese dentists, 'tis said, strengthen their fingers by all manner of curious means, pulling pegs, using musical balls, walnuts and other similar objects, so that when they are called upon to pull teeth, it is possible to extract teeth with their fingers. Metal dental tools seem to be as much of an oddity in China as this quaint and painful practice appears to Americans.

On June 1, 1933, the Jules Charbneau "Miniature Museum," comprising 23,000 pieces at the time, was shown to the public in San Francisco at the Emporium. The success was such that the owners made arrangements to exhibit their collection throughout the United States. From Maine to California and from the state of Washington to the tip of Florida, the 28,000 miniatures have been viewed in theatres and department stores by more than 6,000,000 people. The owner of the collection has shown it in the Orient and has arranged private showings to royalty in several countries. During four summers, the "Miniature Museum" was displayed in Radio City Music Hall. Thousands of visitors to the Golden Gate Exposition of 1939 and 1940 saw these miniatures attractively displayed in twenty show cases.

Mr. Charbneau is proud of his mechanical miniatures and believes he has the largest collection of this type. A broadcasting station is among this group, a coat pocket transmitter presented by O. B. Hanson, NBC vice-president. The microwave transmitter weighs less than one pound. Its wave frequency is 300,000,000

cycles; it generates one tenth of a watt or about 1/500 of an ordinary electric lamp's rating and its broadcasting radius is three miles. A sewing machine, valued at twenty times the price of an actual machine was made by a Los Angeles schoolboy, Henry Nelson, and a jeweler, Ted Brown. Also in the mechanical class are a reproduction of Benjamin Franklin's printing press copied from the original press in the Smithsonian Institution, a four cylinder gasoline motor the size of a spark plug, a two by two inch model of a Steinway grand piano, a two inch electric refrigerator, a matching two inch electric range which operates on six volts of current, and a cash register. Four men labored six months to make the register which is two inches wide and two and one-half inches high. Keys labeled \$2 and \$3 may be pressed and the sale of \$5 appears in the small window; a bell rings and the cash drawer opens automatically showing several miniature coins in the till.

Aside from the working models and mechanical miniatures, the items of the collection vary greatly. There is the Lord's Prayer, all 254 letters, printed on the head of a pin; a complete tool chest from Holland; Chinese cricket fighting equipment; including the gourd sleeping cages for the fighters and a separate



*A feature of the Charbneau Collection, a miniature chess set and table standing at the side of a cigarette.*

fighting arena; twenty pairs of dressed fleas; a cut diamond, 1/500 of a carat; a minute airplane with a pin head for a landing field; 20,000 screws which fit in a thimble; a camera which takes pictures one-fourth by five-eighths of an inch; and an Indian basket, described as "smaller than a drop of water but larger than a grain of sand," made by a blind Indian squaw who wove it from cattail fibre.

A prized possession among the 28,000 objects is a three by four inch bird pipe organ. When the spring is released, a gold filigree lid snaps open and from the tortoise shell box rises a small bird. While the pipe organ is playing, the bird's beak opens and closes, his wings flap and he turns around slowly. Little history was available concerning this exquisite toy when Mr. Charbneau purchased it in Paris but it is probable that a court jeweler made it about 150 years ago for some member of the French nobility. A small organ similar to the one just described was on exhibition in the Louvre several years ago.

While in London in 1938, Mr. Charbneau wrote to Queen Mary of England about his collection and she invited him to visit Windsor Castle to see her miniatures. He presented each of the Princesses and the Queen with gold spoons made in China. Later, by Royal Messenger, he received a letter of thanks and a jeweled casket made of crystal and sardonyx as a gift of his collection.

Among the books and miniature writing is a tooled leather volume made by the Cuneo Press in Chicago. Of Nigerian goat's leather, it was tooled by Montenay, who made many of the books for Queen Mary's Dolls' House. The volume is illustrated and printed with six different languages. It is so small that when exhibited it rests easily on a man's thumbnail.

Whenever the collection is exhibited, Jules Charbneau or his daughter Isabella are lecturing while Mrs. Charbneau unpacks and arranges all the articles for exhibition. She prefers to do this work herself and has perfected a system which saves her hours of time. Isabella Charbneau's miniatures are shown with her father's. They are more domestic in nature, principally tea sets, dining room furnishings, coffee sets and tableware. One of the newest objects added since the exhibition at the San Francisco Fair is a gold coffee set made by a San Francisco jeweler; the entire set fits on a gold tray smaller than a dime.

World travel has temporarily been suspended for the Charbneaus but Mr. Charbneau is still collecting oddities from his Oriental friends in San Francisco and an occasional sailor or trader who knows of his life-long interest in miniatures.

## Chapter II

### *Crown Princess of Miniaturia*

#### COLLEEN MOORE

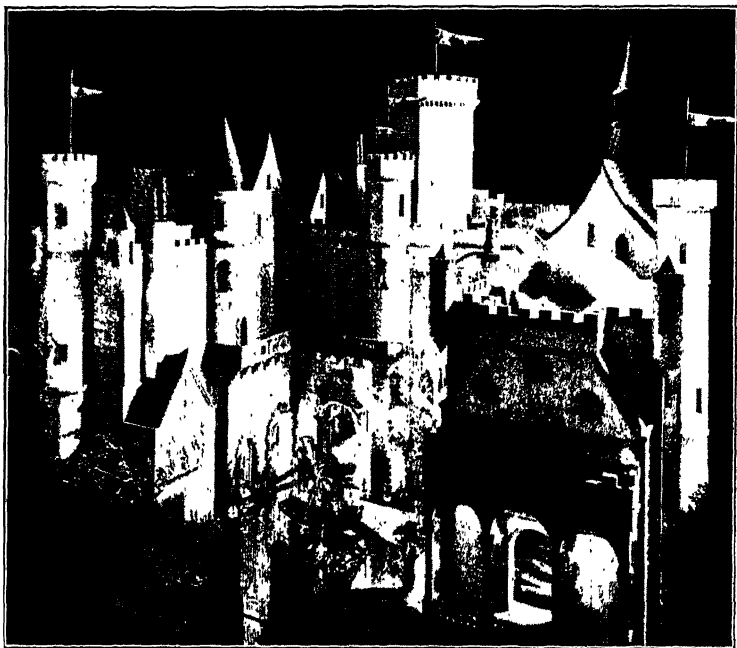
One of the most charming miniature collectors is lovely Kathleen Morrison, known for many years by her theatrical name of Colleen Moore and in private life, Mrs. Homer Hargrave of Chicago. During the 1920's she was Hollywood's undisputed movie queen. She has retained the charm which became the Moore trademark during her years of public life although she has permanently retired from motion pictures and now leads a busy but domestic life with her husband and children.

For some, hobbies are an aid to their career, for others, a career aids a hobby. It is the latter which is true in the case of Miss Moore. When her studio press agents discovered that she was a collector of miniatures, they photographed her with several of her prize pieces, furnishing photographs to newspaper editors all over the country. Only two or three such publicity pictures were released by her studio and letters began pouring in from dealers with miniatures to sell. As a result, Miss Moore was able to acquire rare and valuable items during the 1920's before collecting miniatures had become a vogue. Hundreds of objects purchased during that decade, are now numbered among the 1,800 pieces in her Dolls' House.

Her interest in miniatures goes back to childhood when at the age of two, her father, Charles Morrison, built her a dolls' house in a cigar box. This was the first of a series of dolls' houses which, as she grew older, became more elaborate. After the cigar box, came a three room bungalow, a two story residence, six model rooms and finally the present castle built along fabulous lines, but all in a miniature scale. The castle is the result of many years of collecting; a large budget and a host of friends who added pieces to the collection for the sheer joy of helping to create the perfection that is the Colleen Moore Dolls' House today.

On a base meant to represent a towering precipice, glittering in its splendor, stands the marvelous castle, nine feet wide and nine feet long, the uppermost battlement of which reaches a height of fourteen feet. Throughout the eleven rooms, the great entrance hall and the extensive garden, the castle and its furnishings are in perfect scale, one inch to the foot, a goal toward which Miss Moore has spent years working. Objects, however valuable or rare they may be, which are slightly larger or smaller than required, are not exhibited.

Like every collector, she cherishes the first miniature she ever received, a one inch English dictionary, a gift from her father when she was five years old. This dictionary, the real beginning of her interest in collecting, is on a gold reading stand in the famous undersea library of the dolls' house. Ever after her first gift, whenever she was asked what she wanted for her birthday or for Christmas, her answer always was: "Give me something for my dolls' house." Her parents and relatives, when traveling in Europe, brought back many rare treasures to add to her small collection. When she became an internationally



known motion picture star, she amassed a fortune in jewelry which has since been used to fashion decorations befitting a Prince and Princess of Fairyland. Diamonds, emeralds, rubies and pearls were gathered from the four corners of the earth to realize a child's dream of fairyland.

Miss Moore has an unusual attitude regarding jewelry. Rather than wear it she prefers to use the stones and settings to make some piece of furniture for the doll house. More of her jewels have gone into the sumptuous chandelier of the living room than in any other fixture in the dolls' house; four bracelets, two necklaces and one six carat ring.

This work of art was made by H. B. Crouch, Hollywood jeweler, the craftsman called upon by directors to reproduce crown jewels and period jewelry for motion pictures. Miss Moore took her bracelets, necklaces and ring to his studio and asked him whether it would be possible for him to make a chandelier for the dolls' house. "Leave it to me. I'll call you when it is finished," was his answer. Several weeks later, the craftsman asked her to inspect the completed chandelier, declaring it was the best piece he had ever made. He was so proud of his handiwork that he had constructed a stage setting of black velvet curtains, hung the chandelier against this background and lighted it with spotlights; the effect was even more beautiful than Miss Moore had imagined. This chandelier is considered one of the most perfect miniatures in the dolls' house. The electric light bulbs, each smaller than a grain of wheat, will burn fifteen hours.

Like all collectors, Miss Moore's interest in her hobby never lags. She is always on the alert to discover some wonderful miniature in an unlikely place. She believes that "everything that can be collected in regular size can be collected in miniature—if you look long enough." But many times she has encountered difficulties. Several years ago Miss Moore wanted a pair of glass slippers for her Princess. These slippers must be hollow, ready for the Princess to step into and wear, should she ever appear. All her inquiries among expert glass manufacturers here in the United States were unsuccessful. Then she appealed to the artists at Murano, the city near Venice which is one of the sources of world-famous Venetian glassware.

"Si, Donna Moore. We will gladly make you a pair of glass slippers fit for a fairy Princess," they assured her, "but the





*A gem of the Colleen Moore doll house is her famous chandelier that was made from the diamonds and emeralds from her personal jewelry.*

slippers cannot be made hollow. It is impossible to make such tiny slippers hollow. No glassblower in the world can do that."

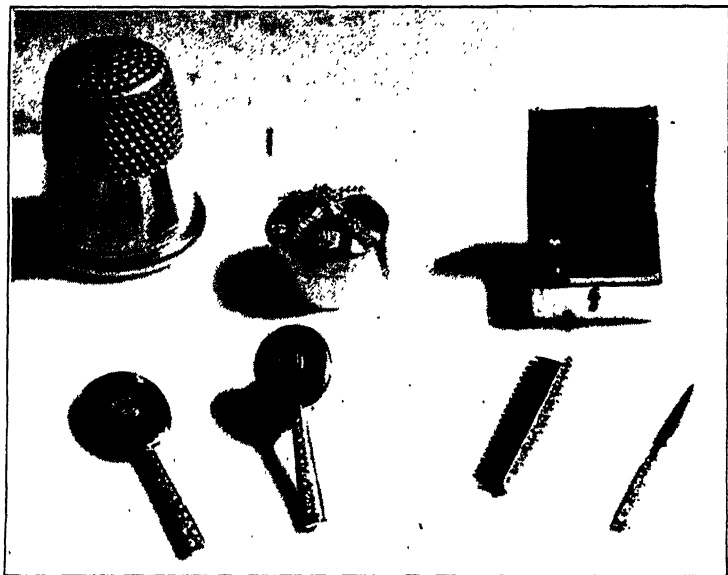
After such an answer from these masters of their craft, Miss Moore reluctantly gave up the idea. Then, quite by chance, a friend mentioned the work of a retired glassblower of Bay City, Michigan, who spent his leisure hours making glass miniatures. Miss Moore went to see the glassblower. Today, there is a tiny pair of hollow glass slippers on a seed pearl pillow, one inch square, in the bedroom of the Princess. What the Venetian masters had termed "impossible," a retired American glassblower had accomplished.

There is an interesting story about a second pair of slippers in the Princess' bedroom, a pair of high-heeled red satin shoes. These slippers, less than a half inch long, are the work of a Greek shoemaker who had never before made any miniatures. When the castle was first shown in New York City, Miss Moore received several telephone calls from a man with a thick foreign accent, who said, "I have a gift for Cinderella." When he came into the exhibition room, he pulled from his pocket a small cardboard box in which he had wrapped the red satin slippers. They had leather soles and heels and were lined with pink satin. He also brought with him the lasts upon which he had made these tiny shoes. The lasts were mounted on the end of an ordinary monkey wrench. The shoemaker explained he had used the wrench so that it could be securely held in a vise while he fashioned the hand made shoes. He would accept no money for his work, saying, "I give these to Cinderella." Every shoemaker who has seen these red satin slippers has been amazed that anyone would have the patience and skill to make such small shoes.

What excites the admiration of jewelers are the miniature brush, comb, nail file and engagement ring in the toilet set on the dresser in the Princess' bedroom. The diamond studded nail file and tortoise shell comb are perfect miniature reproductions ornamented with an incredibly small royal crest. These were made by Guglielmo Cini. Mr. Cini and Miss Moore first met at a preview of her castle in Boston. She asked him to design, in competition with several other jewelers, the dressing table set for the Fairy Princess; Mr. Cini's design was selected. The jeweler's first task was the jewel box, nine-twelfths of an inch square and five-twelfths of an inch high, made of pink gold with an ornament of diamonds set in platinum from corner to corner and a larger diamond in the

center. In one of the triangles, he made a small crown in platinum set with diamonds. The greatest difficulty was to secure full cut diamonds small enough to set on the box—they had to be one-fifth the size of the smallest diamond usually set in a finger ring. After a lengthy search, Mr. Cini finally found a diamond merchant in Boston who had a paper of diamonds, each one the size of a speck of dust; they were from 375ths to 500ths of a carat. When the merchant found out how Mr. Cini planned to use the diamonds, he was positive that the painstaking work of setting such small jewels was impossible. The jeweler, however, was determined to achieve something which, he knew, would please Miss Moore. When the box was completed it was lined in red satin and fitted with a tray and a place for the engagement and the wedding ring both of which Mr. Cini later made. The ring is so small that it is just possible to insert the tapered end of an ordinary straight pin through its center, and the key to the jewelry box must be manipulated with pincers to work the lock.

The next pieces to be made in the set were the comb, mirror and hairbrush. The comb was made of tortoise shell with the top



*Toilet set, with thimble for comparison.*

set in gold, platinum and diamonds. Securing a mirror in proper scale proved to be difficult. The jeweler had several optical companies attempt to make one but they were not satisfactory. Finally a neighboring optician obliged by experimenting with a dozen different mirrors, before he fashioned one which the jeweler could use. But the most difficult piece of all was the hairbrush. To find bristles which would be in correct scale seemed almost impossible. Mr. Cini tried the bristles from a baby's toothbrush but even these were too large. Then he thought of fur. He experimented with several kinds and finally found a puff of silver fox to be the answer. Now the brush was to be made. He used a button, cut out the oval and drilled the holes. By counting so many hairs for each hole and sowing the bristle with silk, he eventually completed the brush.

Two enamelled nineteenth century chairs in the Princess' bedroom were acquired by Miss Moore's aunt in Paris in 1920. Aside from their workmanship, Miss Moore admired the unusual trademark which the jeweler had engraved on the outer back of each piece. In 1932, in New Orleans, she visited an antique shop which had miniatures for sale. There she found a sofa, table and stool decorated with the same unusual trademark she had admired on the two chairs her aunt found in Paris, twelve years earlier. She asked the dealer how he had come into possession of these miniatures. He explained that he had purchased the three pieces from a shop in Paris, which proved to be the same one where her aunt had found the two chairs. Any other collector could easily have purchased these three pieces and Miss Moore would never have known that the nineteenth century jeweler, who made the two chairs, had also fashioned three companion pieces. Call it fate or collector's luck but after twelve years, and a distance of thousands of miles, the five miniature pieces, were now reunited and since 1932 have been in the Princess' bedroom. Many collectors have experienced similar strokes of good fortune, discovering in some out of the way source, a book, a porcelain or some other valuable object which fits into their collection and completes a set.

In recent years, the services of many artists have been secured to create miniatures representative of the branches of the arts in which they excel. George McManus, veteran cartoonist and creator of "Maggie and Jiggs" made a drawing of Jiggs, outfitting him in the garb of Old King Cole. Jiggs and the other personages of the "Bringing up Father" comic strip puckishly look out, in minia-

ture, seemingly unimpressed by all the grandeur of the great hall. James Montgomery Flagg, artist, and Willy Pogany, illustrator of "Alice in Wonderland" have made miniature paintings which also hang in this great hall.

A built-in museum is another one of the unusual features of the hall. A diminutive statue of the Goddess Isis which came from the tomb of King Tutankhamen and a kohl jar of alabaster from the Tomb of the Kings, Valley of the Nile, are the two oldest objects in this museum intended for the imaginary occupants of the dolls' house. By comparison, the century old duelling pistols seem almost modern. The chairs for the Three Bears are there. Mounted on individual ordinary pins stuck in a small cork are three balsa wood chairs, one for each member of the family. The complete miniature weighs 1/50,000 of an ounce and is protected by a small glass bell which fits over the cork.

Works of modern American authors have also been recorded in miniature for the dolls' house. Original stories, many of which were written especially for the castle by such famous authors as Willa Cather, Hendrick Van Loon, Sinclair Lewis, Edna Ferber, Joseph Hergesheimer, Kathleen Norris, Jim Tully and Booth Tarkington, are bound in one-inch volumes and placed on verdigris copper book shelves raised off the level of the library floor by several tortoise shell steps. One oddity in the collection is the book which contains a toe print from each of the Dionne quintuplets.

The artist who designed the library furnishings for Howard Grieve, interior decorator of the dolls' house, used fantastic and nautical motives. No definite style or combination of period styles was followed. The furnishings are the artist's conception of an interior suitable for the notables of Fairyland. Mr. Grieve and Miss Moore searched for several years before they found someone who could design and had imagination, but did not know too much about period furnishings. An artist with too extensive a knowledge of interior decoration, they felt, would conform too strictly to known types of period styles. What they wanted was an able designer who would give free reign to his imagination.

Many applicants were interviewed for the job; Mr. Grieve went through the same routine with each. After making them feel comfortable and spending a few minutes in generalities, he directed the conversation to period styles. Then he invariably

posed the question: "What would you say are the primary differences between a Louis XIV and a Louis XV leg?" When the applicant launched into a pedantic exposition of the features distinguishing the two, Mr. Grieve knew he had not found the right person. Finally, an artist named Alice O'Neill entered his office one day, bringing with her a large portfolio containing sketches which indicated to Mr. Grieve that she might be the one person who could design a room for fairies. But to make certain, he went through the same routine, pausing after he asked her the fatal question. Miss O'Neill was plainly ill at ease. Stammering with nervousness she managed to say weakly, "I believe Louis XIVth's leg was fatter than Louis XVth's leg."

It is this young artist, who is responsible for the sea snail and shell furniture in the Prince's library. It was she who thought of a "tummy reading chair" for fairies who might like to rest on their convex tummies while reading. Special lounges were also designed for fairies who prefer to read while leaning on their elbows, laying on their backs with their feet in the air or resting on their right or left side.

This undersea library is the fifth designed and built for the castle. Four other sketches and blueprints had been made but when they were executed, they did not measure up to Miss Moore's expectations; she was aiming at perfection. Between the books on the shelves is what Miss Moore terms "a fortune in miniatures." One of these, a five hundred year old Chinese vase is worth what used to be "a king's ransom." There is an interesting story regarding the small trophy cup on one of the shelves of the library. The trophy is a miniature of the famous America's Cup, which Sir Thomas Lipton tried so valiantly to wrest from the more successful American yachtsmen. While Miss Moore was riding in a taxicab down Madison street in New York City on her way to catch a train, she happened to notice an antique shop which she had never visited. She had a feeling there might be some interesting miniatures there, so asked the cab driver to draw up to the curb. Shaking his head, the shopkeeper said: "No, Madame, we don't as a rule carry any miniatures. Right now I have only one small object among all my antiques. But if you can use it, I'll sell it. I just happened to have it here." And he brought out the only miniature in the store, the trophy cup which is now in the library. Only a collector would believe that such an incident could take place; yet some of the most highly prized pieces in many collections have been discovered in much the same manner.

Among the fund of anecdotes treasured by every hobbyist such episodes are not uncommon; the result perhaps of what may be termed a collector's "sixth sense," the ability to discover hidden treasures.

One of the miniature books on the library shelves is a ten thousand word handwritten fairy tale, authored by Miss Moore and written by a miniature writer who lives in the Northwest. While the castle was in Seattle, Miss Moore received in the mail a small book with, what seemed to be, little more than pen scratches on the pages. Under a jeweler's glass, she was able to read the perfect written words of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. The writer of those infinitesimal words was a cripple living with his two children in a secluded place outside Seattle. Unable to walk, he had employed the long hours to advantage and taught himself how to write in miniature. Miss Moore first learned of his ability when she received his copy of the Gettysburg Address. Wishing to commission him for further work, she visited his home. He agreed to inscribe her ten thousand word fairy tale in a small leather bound volume on the condition that his name not be revealed. He explained that his skill had never been used as a means of livelihood. Miss Moore wished to assist him by letting collectors of miniature books know of his fine penmanship but he has preferred to remain anonymous. She feels she is fortunate to have an example of his work and prizes his volume as it is one of the best she has seen in miniature writing. Most experts in this field find it more difficult to write than to print.

Throughout the dolls' house, murals and wall carvings, ceiling paintings and furniture decoration represent characters in ageless fairy tales and world folklore. Profiles of the King and Queen of Hearts form the legs of the fantastic kitchen table; Cinderella dashes to the safe haven of her fireplace on a mural in the living room; Sinbad the Sailor swaggers through his adventures in a series of drawings on the dome of the great hall; characters from children's stories of the Orient are carved on minute chests; and the folklore of Russia is painted in brilliant colors on the carved walnut bed in the Prince's room.

When Miss Moore first decided to build her collection around the theme of fairyland's imaginary inhabitants, she re-read every fairy story she could find. She was amazed at the blood-curdling plots: children left in trackless woods to suffer perils of

cold and hunger; boys or girls at the mercy of vicious beasts; and more frequent decapitations than murders in a modern detective novel. She found that the characters in Mother Goose, at one time, were meant to represent real persons. The "Queen of Hearts" was the sobriquet of Elizabeth, titular queen of Bohemia, only daughter of James I of England. The nickname was bestowed upon Elizabeth because of her unusual grace and beauty. Hundreds of adventurous young gentlemen traveled to the Court of Orange at The Hague to offer their swords to the King and their hearts to the fair Queen. The "Knave of Hearts" who "stole those tarts and took them clean away" was Ferdinand II. The "King of Hearts" was the Queen's husband, Frederick V., Prince of the Palatinate. This simple little rhyme depicts the struggle between the Knave and the King for possession of the crown.

Mary, Queen of Scots was the subject of many rhymes, notably *Little Bo-Peep*. It is not improbable that the author of some of the jingles aimed at Queen Mary was her hated rival, Queen Elizabeth, who took keen delight in jinglemaking and it is unlikely that she would hesitate to hold up Mary to the laughter of their contemporaries. "Humpty-Dumpty" who fell off the wall was Richard III, slain in battle, and "not all the King's horses, not all the King's men could put Humpty-Dumpty together again." "Jack Spratt" was Charles I whose wife Henrietta of France plied him throughout his life with "fat" and "lean" tidbits of advice on how to run the country.

The dolls' house contains many amazing examples of handiwork. In the great hall, the floor is black onyx carved with rose vines; the drawing room floor is made of rose quartz inlaid with green jade; the floor in the Princess' bedroom is mother of pearl cut in cubes and bordered in gold; the bed and perfume cabinet in the Princess' bathroom are both carved gold; the canopy over the bed is of orchid enamel. Exquisite needlepoint tapestries depicting adventures of King Arthur and his Knights adorn the walls of the dining hall. The table is set with Bristol glass, a complete dinner service, and monogrammed forks about one eighth inch long. The miniature white bearskin rug at the foot of the Prince's bed is an example of the taxidermist's art. The fur is one small ermine skin; the teeth in the realistic head were extracted from a field mouse. The bed itself is of carved walnut; a perforated ceiling is wrought in gold. Also in the Prince's bedroom is a small carved gold Chinese screen mounted on a teak-





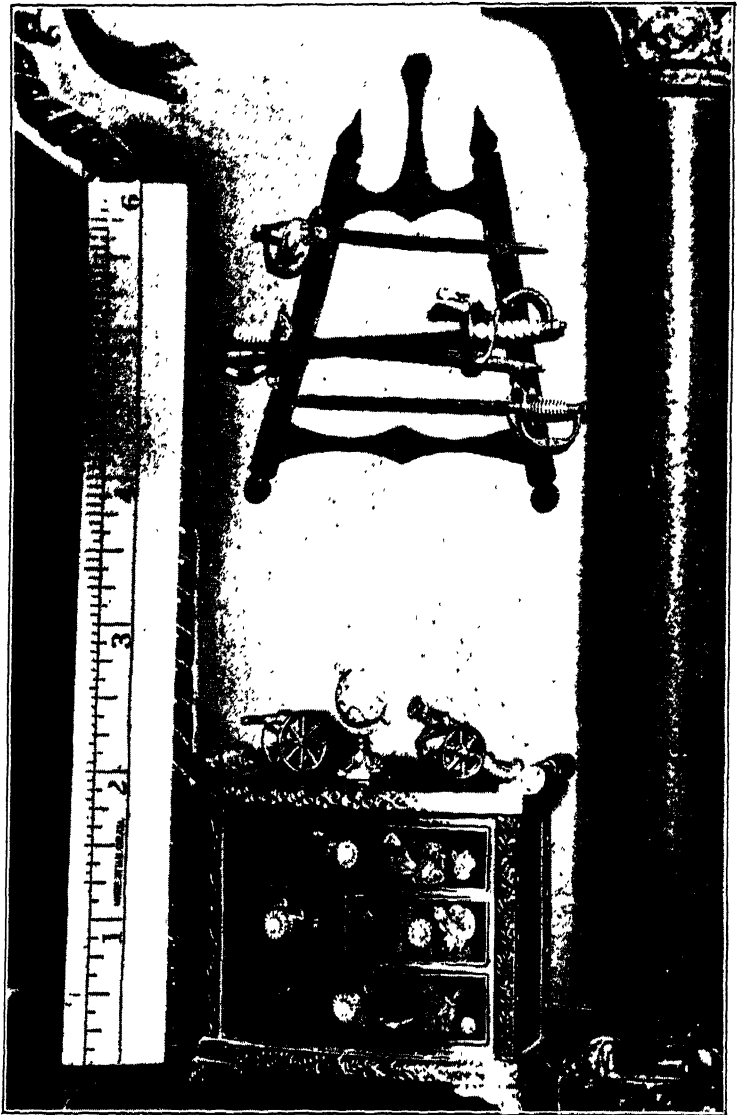
*Louis period drawing room in the Colleen Moore doll house.*

wood stand. This screen once belonged to the fabulous Nevada silver queen and was bought by Miss Moore at an auction sale in Los Angeles. On one side of the screen are engraved the figures of heros and heroines in two Chinese fairy tales; on the reverse are the Chinese characters which tell the story in word pictures.

Despite these elaborate decorations, Miss Moore still believes there is room for improvement. She is constantly making changes. Even now, rooms are remodeled, new pieces added and old miniatures replaced by more suitable pieces. Just recently, Miss Moore wished to add to the dolls' house a pair of beautiful diamond clips. When she showed her jeweler the ornaments, he said, "These are not clips. They are the backs of chairs." He mounted the diamond clips on enamelled seats, made diamond studded legs and there were two brilliant chairs to add to the Princess' bedroom. Several other chairs in the drawing room have interesting histories. The backs of these chairs are made of intricately carved silver, originally intended as Mexican belt buckles but ingeniously adapted for this new use. Next to the door, in the drawing room, are two small amber vases, once part of the collection of the Dowager Empress of China. The vases were the gift of Laura LaPlante, motion picture actress.

The smallest objects in the castle are the "miniature replicas of miniatures," tiny hens, chickens, vehicles and musical instruments, almost too diminutive to be seen without the aid of a glass. These playthings are not part of the museum exhibit but were made to scale for the delight of imaginary occupants of the castle and are placed on carved ivory tables in the great hall. Strands of red ropes threaded through ivory posts guard these fragile masterpieces.

The finest art work in the castle is acknowledged by many authorities to be the stained glass windows in the chapel made by Helga Brabon. The window representing "Daniel in the Lion's Den" is generally conceded to be the most outstanding example of miniature stained glass work in the world. The cathedral organ, fifteen inches high, has golden pipes measuring from six to eleven inches. It is fitted between cast pillars of bronze and gold decorated with cherubs in bas-relief. There are a hundred keys, none of them more than a sixteenth of an inch wide. It plays electrically by remote control. Inlaid in the chapel floor are the Ten Commandments in ivory and gold. Near the organ are priceless miniatures gathered from Europe and Asia. Underneath



*A corner in the doll house showing rare Oriental miniatures.*

a jeweled Russian icon, less than one and one half inches square, is a tiny candelabra set with one large diamond from Miss Moore's mother's engagement ring. A miniature primitive painting of the thirteenth century is used as an altar piece; the altar set is made of mutton fat jade; a 500 year old iron crucifix less than three quarters of an inch long also stands on the altar. One of the most unusual pieces in the chapel is the ivory seal of Pope Pius IX. During his reign there was an insurrection and the Vatican was looted. Most of the rare treasures, jewels and books, were saved, but among the personal possessions carried off by the looters was this ivory seal used by the Pope. From the thief, the seal changed hands many times until it came into the possession of one of the guardsmen at the Vatican. An Italian noblewoman purchased the piece and sent it as a gift to her daughter in the United States. Later the daughter disposed of the seal to the antique dealer in Boston from whom it was purchased by Miss Moore. Anxious to verify the curious tale, she took the seal to Catholic church officials in Boston who checked all the details and confirmed the story as told by the antique dealer.

For the collector with a technical turn of mind, an achievement of the dolls' house is the intricate electrical wiring and water system. These engineering problems were difficult to solve because of the small scale. But they were handled so expertly by Charles Morrison, Miss Moore's father, that no wires or pipes are open to view to spoil the illusion of magic and unreality which pervades the dolls' house. Chandeliers in the rooms light as if they had been touched by a magic wand; a tiny cascade of water flows into the Princess' bath and droplets of water fall from the leaves of the "weeping" willow tree in the garden. In both instances, the necessary mechanical devices have been worked in so cleverly with the design of the room and the garden that the source of the water is not easily apparent.

The castle was first shown in 1935. Since that time it has been exhibited all over the United States. All shipping has been handled by the Railway Express Company who are proud of the fact that during the thousands of miles not one single piece has yet been broken or damaged.

As the castle travels from one city to another, many collectors have generously given Miss Moore miniatures which they felt might fit in with her collection. While in Toledo, Ohio, an official of a museum of that city presented Miss Moore with a

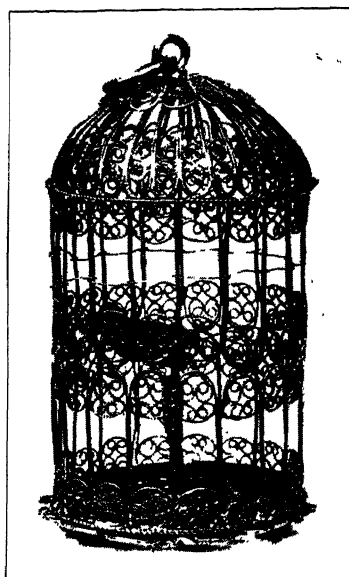
miniature Syrian glass bottle used in 400 B.C. When the castle was in Philadelphia, Miss Moore received a miniature edition of *The Philadelphia Ledger*. In 1913, the *Ledger* had given a large dinner party for its employees and everyone attending received a copy of the paper, less than two inches square. This paper is now on one of the tables of the library. A Detroit businessman presented her with a series of small books and a pair of gold book ends; a violin maker in a small town fashioned a miniature violin and presented it to Miss Moore, refusing compensation; Norman Foster, the motion picture director, gave Miss Moore a five hundred year old tiny sandalwood Buddha he had discovered in Tibet.

One of her strangest experiences took place on the opening day of an engagement in a western city. The gallery in which the castle was displayed was thronged with visitors. A tall man who looked like a rancher worked his way through the crowd until he reached Miss Moore's side. "I've got something to show you," he said slowly while he fumbled in his pocket and brought out a small box filled with carved figures. At no time, says Miss Moore, had she ever seen more perfect carving on a small scale. The figures were less than three quarters of an inch high yet his work had the power of expression in miniature that many fine sculptors achieve in life size works. As she admired his specimens, through her mind raced pictures of all the carved pieces she could commission the artist to make for the dolls' house. Then for a moment, she was interrupted. When she turned again to talk to the unknown craftsman he had vanished. Every effort was made to locate him. Articles about the episode were printed that night in local newspapers but there was no response. Nothing more has ever been heard from him. Miss Moore believes he may have immediately returned to the country, not having seen the plea to get in touch with her. She was impressed with his skill but he misinterpreted her reaction. Speechless when she saw his work, Miss Moore thinks he must have interpreted her silence as a lack of interest. The chests decorated with carvings of the adventures of Hans and Gretel and all the other carved miniatures which she believed this stranger could make for her are still in her imagination. She has not yet found a carver who can approach his sharpness of detail and natural lines. But those who know Miss Moore are sure that she will not abandon the search.

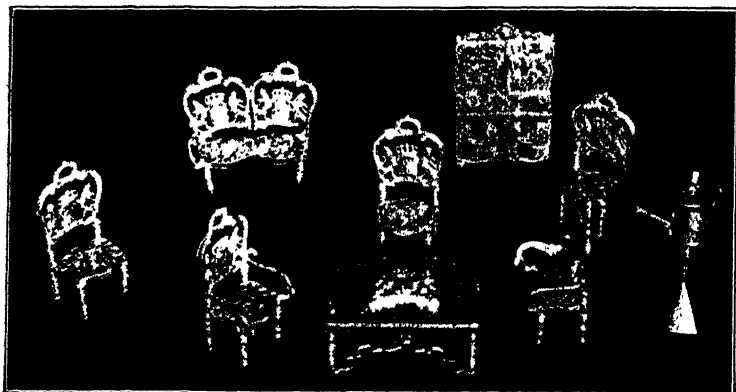
Hundreds of thousands of Americans have seen the doll's house during its travels throughout the United States. There is

no age limit in its appeal: children and adults are enchanted with it. There is always something new of interest to admire and study in this marvel of make believe. But there is no make believe in Miss Moore's eagerness to give full credit to the some 700 artists and craftsmen who worked for nine years to achieve perfection. This characteristic of generosity adds to her charm.

She may spend months of time searching for one of the pieces in her Dolls' House, but when a more suitable miniature is located a substitution is made, and she gives the original pieces to her friends or to her daughter. Furnishing her own dolls' house, her daughter is the envy of all her playmates as she has many of the priceless silver, gold and ivory miniatures which formerly ornamented the rooms of her mother's fabulous castle.



*Filigree silver bird cage, 1675-1700,  
South German. — Courtesy the  
Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
New York.*



*Silver miniatures. Collection of Mrs. Alice B. Pedder.*

## Chapter III

### *Precious Metal Miniatures*

For centuries royal and titled families have counted their wealth in pieces of gold and silver plate, made more valuable than the raw bullion for having been fashioned into useful or decorative shapes by gold and silversmiths of the day. But times of stress have brought about the destruction of much historic plate; without a pang, precious objects have been consigned to the crucible. In England, from the time of the Norman conquest to the death of George III, the destruction of gold and silver plate, both sacred and secular, has been vast. In the Wars of the Roses, the plate of the barons was transformed into metal; during the Civil War, the ruin of the royal collection of gold and silver plate, regarded as the most precious in Europe in Tudor times, was complete.

In Italy, as early as 1314, the city of Florence had statutes for the regulation of goldsmiths; working in metal was a well established art, yet throughout history no other country has suffered more severe losses in secular plate.

Today, nothing remains of the great collection of the Court of Ferdinand and Isabella, the most brilliant epoch in the history of Spain. All the great treasure of the Escorial and princely houses was converted into coin during the Civil Wars of 1830 and 1840 and at later times, and when King Alfonso XIII left the throne in 1931, the royal collection contained no Spanish secular plate of the sixteenth century. What was left of the Spanish treasures was housed in the great cathedrals and churches before the last Spanish Civil War; what became of this gold and silver plate is not known.

Few specimens of the skill of early Irish craftsmen have survived the centuries; the Ardagh chalice, the Tara brooch and a small number of decorative objects of the eighth century remain as evidence of the masterpieces created by goldsmiths in Ireland; a mere glimpse of the skill of the Anglo-Norman metal worker is afforded by the famous Gloucester candlestick of 1107-1113 exhibited in the Victoria and Albert Museum; this masterpiece





*Constance F. Furbush watch charms.*

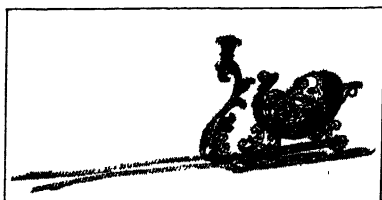
escaped destruction because it is not made of pure silver.

France's great plate treasures, like those of England, also perished. The treasure of Charles V alone contained about twenty-five large gold cups and thirty-six smaller gold hanaps, many of which were enamelled and enriched with pearls and gems. In addition there were goblets, salts, ewers, basins and five great nefs, all of solid gold. Even such common household articles as washing basins were of this precious metal, richly enamelled. But written accounts alone attest to their existence for Louis XIV completed the destruction of the royal plate of France by converting it into coin for the prosecution of his wars.

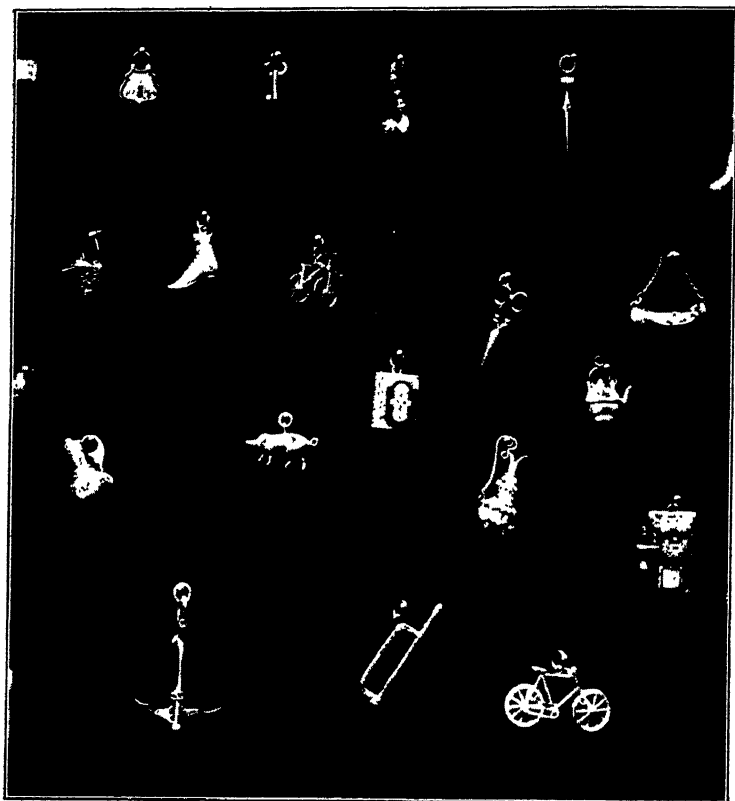
No trace remains of the precious plate belonging to the House of Braganze except the record that as early as 1382 most of the shops along Gold Street in Lisbon were those of prominent goldsmiths who fashioned princely treasures. Today only the name of the stree is unchanged. Dusty archives state that the earlist known recorded regulations for the craft in Portugal date from 1460. These craftsmen prospered so well that by the middle of the sixteenth century Lisbon could boast of 430 gold and silversmiths, most of them located in shops on Gold Street. But in 1725, the extravagant King John V of Portugal ordered most of the precious royal plate to be melted. Not only vessels of Portugese workmanship but several pieces of English silver, presumably bridal gifts and plate ordered by John V himself, suffered that fate. Again in 1755, more plate perished, this time in the Lisbon earthquake.

In the absence of the plate itself, a knowledge of the style and size of secular plate used in European countries during early centuries has been gained from paintings of still life, banquets and building interiors and, in some rare instances, from miniatures.

It is probable that European smiths, seeking to vary their work, produced occasional miniatures for their clients' children or even as a bauble for their patrons. If such was the practice, however, no written record has been left, only the objects remain. In England alone are there evidences of toymakers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries whose creations, escaping the fate of the larger plate, are collectors' gems today. In the seventeenth century silver toys were in general use among the children of the wealthy. Furniture of the salon, toilet, nursery and kitchen; conveyances such as carriages, chariots, cabriolets, sledges, trucks and countless other articles were reproduced in small scale. Their use was not limited to the toy field for they also served as trinkets and cabinet specimens. Cavaliers, valets, chamber women tending



*Filigree silver sugar, 1675-1760,  
South German. Courtesy of The  
Metropolitan Museum of Art.*



*Constance F. Furbush watch charms.*

their mistresses, milk-sellers, street criers, porters with merchandise, falcons, falconers, hounds, lap dogs, parrots, monkeys, horses, cats, dogs and pigs were all fashioned on a diminutive scale by silversmiths whose principal occupation was the production of regular size plate and decorative objects.

Some years ago, an English solicitor pondered the advisability of opening an unclaimed box that had been gathering dust in his firm's office for over a hundred years. In it he discovered what is probably one of the finest collections of early English silver toys extant. Among the pieces were examples of George Middleton's work, the silversmith whose handicraft is most highly prized for its skill and imagination. Three pieces by Isaac Mayln and examples of John Clifton's skill were easily identified because of their hallmarks. The largest group in the collection were a series by Augustin Courtauld, a prolific toymaker. There were candlesticks, a bed warmer, wool-winder, cups and saucers, plates and spoons, a watering can and other objects. Courtauld's miniatures bear a close relationship to Dutch toys of the period but cannot be compared with George Middleton.

In the late eighteenth century, several silversmiths specialized in miniature making and many of them incorporated the word "toymaker" in their trade sign. Toymakers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were not what they are today. The word "toy" was used in a much broader sense then and referred to small articles of all types rather than to playthings. A contemporary definition of toy makers taken from Sketchley's *Birmingham Directory of 1767* reads as follows:

#### *Toymakers*

An infinite Variety of Articles that come under the Denomination are made here; and it would be endless to attempt to give a list of the whole, but for the information of Strangers we shall here observe that these Artists are are divided into several Branches as the Gold and Silver Toy Makers, who make Trinkets, Seals, Tweezer and Toothpick Cases, Smelling Bottles, Snuff Boxes, and Filigree Work, such as Toilets, Tea Chests, Inkstands, etc., etc. The Tortoiseshell Toy Maker, makes a beautiful variety of the above and other Articles; as does also the Steel; who make Cork Screws, Buckles, Draw and other Boxes; Snuffers, Watch Chains, Stay Hooks, Sugar Knippers, etc., and almost all these are likewise made in various metals.

The making of miniatures in England was mainly confined to the period from 1684 to about 1740 and the majority of hallmarked pieces were produced during those years. London seems to have been the only place where they were made as no reference can be found mentioning a piece of provincial origin. Five men were responsible for the most of the toy pieces which comprised the English toy making trade:

George Middleton .....	1684-1697
MA .....	1697-1715
John Clifton .....	1703-1715
Augustin Courtauld .....	1720-1730
John Le Sage .....	1720-1740

The dates listed are those of the earliest and latest known pieces by the various silversmiths, and are very close to the exact years during which these men worked on miniatures.

Middleton, the earliest and most important of the miniature makers, produced pieces fairly crude in construction but typical of all work from so early a period. For subject matter, he chose not only articles originally made of silver but also fashioned furniture and fireplaces in silver. Middleton constructed one of the first silver toy teapots ever made in England. Tea had been introduced in 1664 and earthenware pots had been used for many years to brew the mixture of leaves and water. His first miniature tea pot was marked 1690, with the initials "GM" and a crescent beneath, and measured two and one quarter inches from handle to spout.

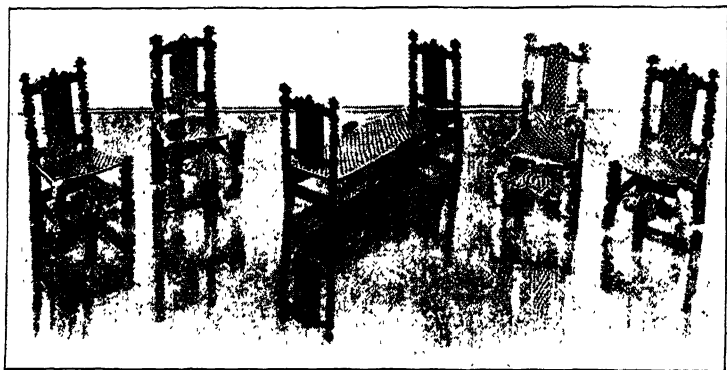
One of the largest collections of historical silver miniatures belong to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph M. May of New York City; it numbers 130 pieces all hallmarked, among which are twenty-six by George Middleton; one piece, the only Scottish item, is a mug made in Inverness about 1685, one and thirteen-sixteenths inches high. Under the auspices of, and for the benefit of the British War Relief Society, the Mays lent a selection of their miniature silver for exhibition in the galleries of James Robinson in New York City from April 22 to May 22, 1941. Other lenders were Mrs. Alfred Bissell, Mrs. Stephen Bonsal, Mr. Henry Ford, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln Isham, Mr. R. Leventritt, Mrs. Andrew McNally III, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Mrs. Clifton Miller, Mrs. Charles Payson, the Philadelphia Museum of Arts, James Robinson, Incorporated, Mrs. W. Plunket Stewart and the Yale Gallery of Fine Arts. Over 200 miniature pieces were shown, the largest ever assembled in this country.

Mrs. Alfred Bissell of Wilmington, Delaware, began collecting miniature porringers and tankards because her husband has been collecting the full size vessels. All items are historical miniatures including three porringers by William Fleming, 1703, Benjamin Bentley, 1706 and William Hooker, 1713 and a brandy warmer, maker IC, possibly American, circa 1730, all shown at the James Robinson exhibition. Although R. Leventritt of East Brewster, Massachusetts is a Chinese porcelain collector, he had one antique miniature coffee urn, shown at Robinson's. The collection of Mrs. Andrew McNally III consists of about four hundred pieces, the greater part of which are old Dutch toys, although she does have some English miniatures, among them one fireplace by John le Sage. Most of the Dutch pieces are hallmarked and more than a century old. It is a well known fact that metal miniature collections in the United States are more important than those in England. Most of the items lent for the Robinson exhibition, however, had their origin in seventeenth and eighteenth century London.

The earliest piece shown and one of the rarest was a silver spoon rack with six trifid spoons made by George Middleton in 1684, lent by the Philadelphia Museum of Art from the Bonsal collection. A year later, Middleton fashioned the pair of candlesticks and the silver whiskey still, lent by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph May. The still consists of three parts, the stand, oven and tank. It is of the same cone shape as the earliest English teapots. The silver fireplace set made by Middleton in 1690 is unusual. Complete with fire dogs, fender, shovel and tongs, no piece in the miniature field holds greater rarity or interest. A kitchen fireplace, also in the May collection made by Augustin Courtauld of London, *circa* 1720, is equipped with two holders for a spit and a trivet to stand a pot on. During this silversmith's most productive period, dolls' houses attained their greatest vogue and he undoubtedly furnished many of them with their silver. As a result, many Courtauld pieces, although not fine workmanship, are interesting to the collector because of the unusual subject matter. The silver distaff for winding wool and the watering can, the silver chocolate pot with swivel stick, all made *circa* 1725 are also in the May collection. The pot is a type found only in the miniature although larger pieces may have existed. It is fitted with a swivel stick for mixing the chocolate and so distinctly resembles an ordinary butter churn that it is possible the churn may have served as an inspiration for the form of this chocolate pot.

The Mays also own a silver teaset made by John Clifton of London, circa 1710, including a coffeepot, sugar bowl, teapot, punch bowl, cream jug, six cups and saucers and six spoons. Clifton was a prolific worker producing many different types of articles including fireplaces.

From this same collection came two kettles of great interest. Few historical kettles are available and they are unique when found either in the large or miniature size. These kettles did not originally have stands but were hung to warm in the fireplace where all cooking was done. The brazier was a separate piece used to keep the kettle warm when it was taken from the fireplace and the hinges on the braziers prove that it served as a heating stand for articles of several sizes. The braziers in these examples were not fitted with a lamp but were used as charcoal burners. With the introduction of tea drinking as a social function, the kettle took on a more graceful form for its appearance in the drawing room and the attached stand as a permanent adjunct to the kettle was devised. These pieces are hall marked "MA, London, 1704" and "MA, London 1713." The maker has been identified as: Matthew Madden, 1697, William Matthew, 1697, Jacob Margas, 1706, or Isaac Malyn, 1710. From 1700 to 1720, silversmiths were compelled by law to mark their work with the first two initials of their surname. Any one of these four men could have made the kettles; they were all living at the time and their surnames began with "MA". Before and



*Set of four chairs, George Middleton, London, 1690. Height, 3¼". Day bed, George Middleton, London, 1690. Height, 2-5/8"; length, 4½".—Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph May.*

after these dates, it was the practice of some workers to use the first and last initials.

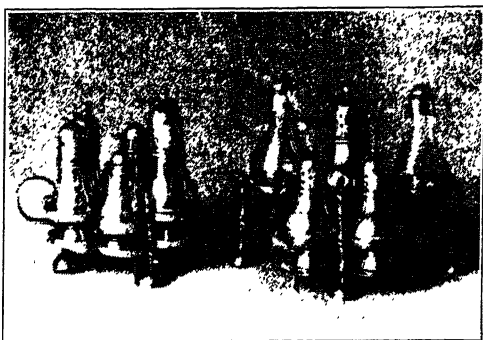
Another silver miniature in the exhibition credited to "MA, London, circa 1710" is a silver coffeepot lent by Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln Isham. This pot is interesting because it was patterned after the first known English earthenware teapot made in 1674 and owned by the East India Company.

The largest museum exhibitor at the Robinson showing was the Philadelphia Museum of Art; most of this institution's silver miniatures were originally presented by Mrs. Stephen Bonsal. The silver spoon rack with six trifid spoons by George Middleton mentioned previously is a piece from the Philadelphia Museum of Art also a teapot, cream jug, posset pot and cover, porringer and tankard, all with the hallmark of the same silversmith, Middleton. The Philadelphia Museum's collection includes an important Court-auld piece; a silver cruet stand containing three silver casters and two glass bottles; other articles attributed to John le Sage, between 1730 to 1740, are a pair of silver tea caddies, a pair of sauceboats, silver salts and trencher salts. Unascribed specimens hallmarked I D with crown, London between 1695 to 1725, are silver paten, teapot, pipkin, snuffers and tray.

The remainder of the pieces shown are of a much later date and were made in England and the United States. There were also many contemporary miniatures made by American silversmiths which are still being produced. The number of collectors who specialize in metal miniatures is small because of the high cost of the hobby. Just as there are few prominent collectors of first edition books, old masters' paintings, so are the ranks of silver miniature collectors more limited.

One of the best known makers of metal miniature reproductions is William B. Meyers of New Jersey, who nine years ago began to reproduce in small scale, full size art objects. The master craftsmen in his shop had been engaged for twenty years or more in copying English antiques, early American pieces, modern Danish and other types of handwrought silver in full size. His first order for a miniature piece was received from a private collector in New York City who desired to have a copy of one of the chandeliers in the Versailles Palace. The original fixture in Versailles is elaborate, with ornaments clustered on each of the sixteen branches. The collector requested that the reproduction

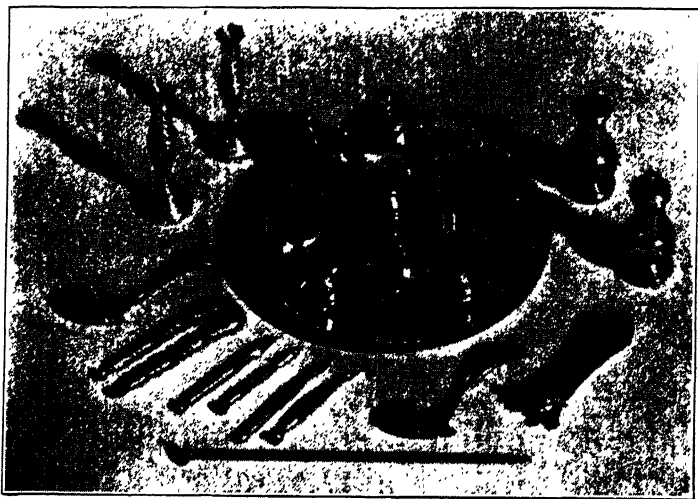




34-8-20—English miniature silver cruet stand.  
London. Augustin Courtauld, about 1708. H.

Om 04, L. Om 096, W. Om 069.

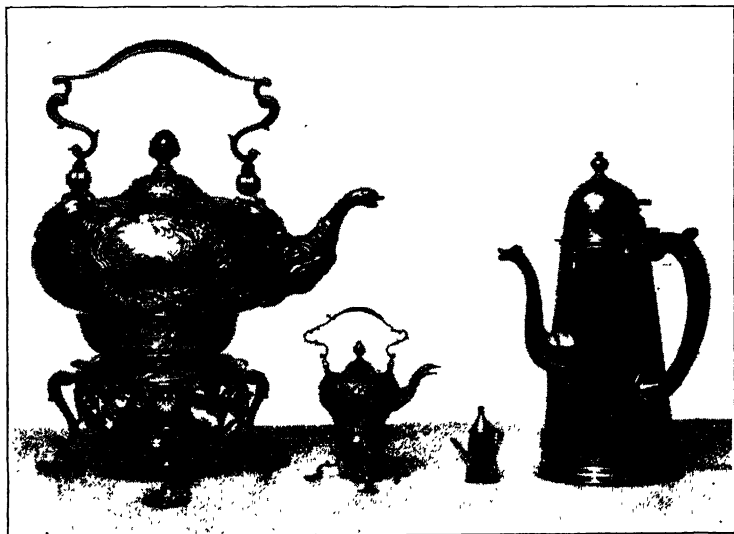
34-8-17—English miniature silver cruet stand,  
London, 1719-1720, L. Om 074, W. Om 053,  
H. Om 036.—Courtesy of the Philadelphia  
Museum of Art, Philadelphia.



*Miniatures in Silver. Collection of R. V. Fisher.*

be made on a one inch scale and left the solution of the problem to Mr. Meyers. It took more than a month to fashion three ounces of silver into the chandelier; tools for working on a small scale had to be made before work could be begun. During the remainder of that year, occasional orders were placed by this private collector for other antique reproductions in miniature, worked in gold and copper as well as silver.

Americans had not yet become fascinated by this hobby. After the first pieces were finished, Mr. Meyers did not undertake reproducing other antiques in small scale as he felt there would be no demand for the miniatures. But shortly afterward, an interior decorator in New York City, the late Miss Emma Haig, placed an order with him to make miniatures for her clients. The first reproduction was an early American basket which Miss Haig reordered frequently. This one silver miniature began to sell faster than the Meyers craftsmen could reproduce it. Several other types of miniatures were added later but still the demand



34-8-29—English miniature silver tea kettle and stand, London, about 1748, probably by Edward Medlicote, H. Om 147, W. Om 11.  
 34-8-16 — English miniature silver coffee pot, London, Jacob Margas, 1707-1708. H. Om 063, D. Om 028. — Courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia.

exceeded the supply; for their perfection delighted collectors. Two of the most admired pieces were a teapot with a hinged lid and a hot water kettle with its hollow lamp into which alcohol could be dropped with a needle.

Since none of these early products were stamped with a black letter "M" which Mr. Meyers now uses as his hallmark, there was no way of identifying their origin. Many dealers in the United States thought they were imported and their representatives searched in Europe and this country to locate the maker. The buyer for Gump's in San Francisco, Mr. L. Stanley Grohs, tried unsuccessfully for two years to trace the origin of this silver work, until he finally located the modest shop in Newark. During 1939 and 1940, Mr. Grohs made arrangements to show examples of the Meyers reproductions at the Golden Gate Exposition. But this was not the first time Californians had seen specimens of this silverwork. Miss Haig had first brought them to the West Coast. She was well known in California, particularly among the members of the motion picture colony, even before she took the Meyers collection there. When one Californian first saw the miniatures, she was so impressed that she invited Miss Haig to come to the West to show these "silver jewels." Miss Haig's customer invited a group of friends to attend a party to see the collection, the first showing outside New York City. At that time there were forty different miniature reproductions represented. None of the samples were for sale but during the evening each of the designs was ordered many times. The New Jersey craftsmen were unprepared to meet such an avalanche of orders but managed to fulfill their obligations.

Since 1937, Meyers reproductions have been handled on the west coast by Foster's-Westwood Shop and Bullock's-Wilshire in Los Angeles, as well as Gump's in San Francisco. The first store in the middle west to display these miniatures was Marshall Field and Company in Chicago, and there is not a large city in the United States that does not now sell many of these four hundred miniature objects. Most of the collectors whose names were mentioned earlier in this chapter as exhibitors for the British War Relief Society displayed some pieces copied in the New Jersey shop. Among the celebrities who collect are Irene Rich, Robert Montgomery, Paul Muni, and Shirley Temple, all of whom have purchased silver miniatures either from Mr. Meyers' dealers or from antique shops. Miss Temple has several collections of small objects but she keeps her silver teaset, dinner ware, silver furni-

ture and animals in a separate mahogany cabinet. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt was so impressed after having seen the display at Gump's that she commented on their exquisite workmanship in her column "My Day." And in one of Mary Boland's motion picture comedies, "The Three Sisters," silver miniatures were used and mentioned in one of the scenes.

The most difficult miniature to reproduce was the Hester Bateman teapot. The large size antique is unusual for its flush or hidden joint. Instead of the lid being joined to the pot with a visible outside joint, the Hester Bateman teapot joint is invisible, the lid is joined flush with the surface of the pot.

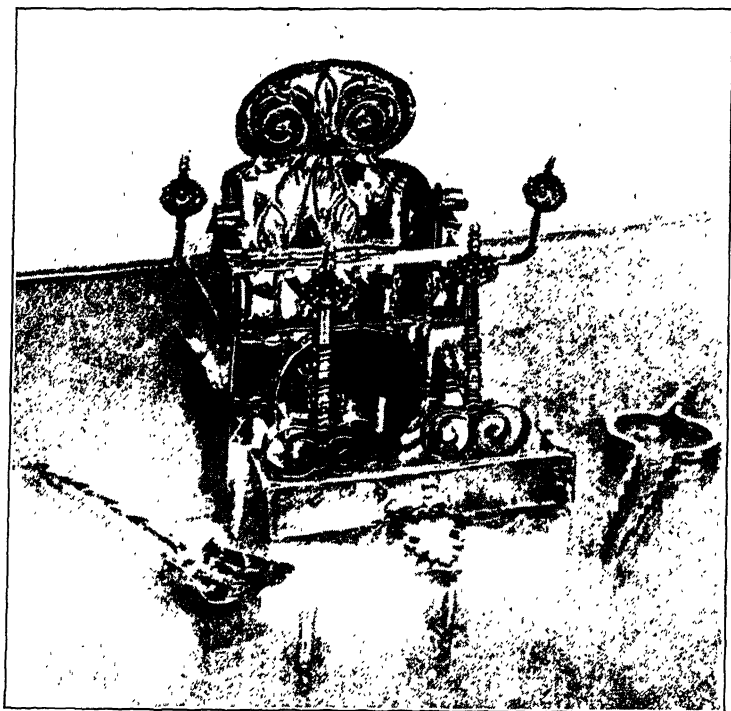
Some of the most popular reproductions made by the Meyers craftsmen are the Paul Revere bowl and jug, a Guernsey mug, the John Allen beaker, 1690, and the Arnold Collins porringer, the full-size original of the latter made in Newport, Rhode Island in 1690. Paul Revere is better known for the part he played in the American Revolution than for the intrinsic value of his work, and because of his role in the history of this country, collectors are eager to add miniatures of Revere metal work.

Original Guernsey mugs were made in the Channel Islands by silversmiths who traveled from France to the islands and were consequently exempt from the hallmarking regulations of the London Goldsmiths' Company.

John Allen who was closely associated with John Edwards in his metal work, lived in Boston. Several fine beakers made by this pair of artisans are in the First Congregational Church at New London, Connecticut, and in the private collection of Francis P. Garvan. Allen and Edwards also made many spout cups, a domestic vessel which attained greater popularity in New England than in the country of its origin, England. This cup was used for a drink made of milk or cream, curdled by the admixture of wine or cider, and oftened sweetened and flavored. Arnold Collins worked with other outstanding silversmiths of his day in Newport, then the center of the industry. He made other containers, but was best known for his porringers.

Porringers were a characteristic American vessel introduced at the end of the seventeenth century and made in great numbers both in silver and pewter throughout the following century. They were common for all sorts of household purposes; each well managed home in New England was regarded as not decently

furnished without at least one of these handy shallow bowls. However the fad never did reach the same degree of popularity in New York or Philadelphia as in New England nor did it seem to have penetrated into the Southern Colonies. Evidence of the popularity of this vessel is found in old inventories and wills: Timothy Lindall, a prosperous merchant of Salem, Massachusetts, had six; General Timothy Ruggles willed two; and in 1769 Joshua Winslow, of Boston, left four to his relatives. Bowls, expressly made as sugar containers were rare before the end of the eighteenth century and the American porringer was doubtless also used for this purpose.



*Fireplace set.—George Middleton, London, 1690. Grate, height, 3"; width at base, 2-7/8". Dogs, height 2-7/16". Fender, width 3". Shovel, length 3½". Tongs, length 3-7/8".—Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph May*

Pieces from museums and private collections are copied by Mr. Meyers but this field of historical items is not unlimited. Before the Revolution, only eighty silversmiths are recorded in New York City; the majority were Dutch, some of whom had been trained in England, while others were Huguenot refugees. In Boston about 150 names of silversmiths are recorded before the year 1800. The sources of authentic American period silver for reproduction purposes is not inexhaustible although little of it was ever melted to finance wars.

After nine years of experience in producing miniatures, it is possible for one silversmith to fashion a one inch scale or two inch scale lazy Susan in one week, as contrasted with the one month required to make the first miniature, the Versailles Palace chandelier. The time required cannot be shortened much further as no machinery is used in the Meyers' shop; all reproductions are made entirely by hand, just like the antiques from which they are copied.

Many of these small shining objects are purchased as gifts by non-collectors. One of the buyers of a New York specialty shop asked Mr. Meyers to mount some of the models on pins for lapel decorations. Two hurricane lamps were soldered to a bar, a small gravy boat was fastened to a tray and a diminutive mirror and a lamp both fitted with clasps. These are not to be confused with metal charms worn on bracelets, as the Meyers miniatures are scale reproductions.

Thirty years ago, R. V. Fisher of Rochester, Pennsylvania, began searching for small souvenirs in every town he visited while traveling with a circus as a trapeze performer and as a clown. Space for packing these records of his travels was at a premium since performers in a circus at that time were only allowed to carry two small trunks, one for costumes and one for street clothes. At first these mementos consisted of inexpensive brass, lead and celluloid objects. But later he discarded all of his earlier purchases and acquired only real miniatures such as fine sterling silver items, tea and coffee sets, flatware sets, fireplace equipment, goblets, dinner plates, candelabras, candlesticks, and dozens of other fine sterling silver pieces, all reproductions of large pieces, ranging in size from one quarter to one and one half inches in size.

Now Mr. Fisher is known among miniature enthusiasts not

only as a collector but also as a dealer. Two of the finer sterling silver miniatures sold by Mr. Fisher are copied from originals by Paul Lamerie, the famous Anglo-French silversmith who is regarded as having been the greatest metal craftsmen of the eighteenth century. Examples of Lamerie's work were included in the Imperial collection of Russia as well as many other European royal houses and collections of titled Englishmen. Lamerie's taste would seem to have been in favor of richly ornamented plate but he occasionally indulged in hammering out plain objects for his clients. The coffee service with tray reproduced by Fisher's craftsmen is one of the more ornate Lamerie designs. The coffee pot, only one and a half inches high, carries the same graceful design, spiralled lid, ebony handle and hand carved peacock spout as the original. Both the sugar basket and the cream pitcher have gold interiors and the tray is ornamented with delicately scalloped edges and beading just beneath the rim, carved handles and ball feet. A dinner plate, also copied from Lamerie, has an engraved scroll edge and is one and three-quarters inches wide.

A coffee service with tray and a candelabra, copied from originals in the Victoria and Albert museum, are two English sterling silver objects reproduced; the large candelabra was made by Ebenezer Coker, hallmarked London, 1767, the coffee service original by Isaac Dighton, hallmarked London, 1705. One silver reproduction, a teapot, copied from a Scottish original is the only other miniature inspired by museum pieces found in the British Isles. The original pot, now in William Randolph Hearst's collection, was made by Harry Beathume in Edinburgh, 1724.

Jacob Hurd, Boston silversmith, 1702-1758, designed and executed thousands of silver objects for the Americans of his day. A tea service made by Hurd is one of the several copies of this American's work made available by Mr. Fisher to his clients. The tea service is not much larger than a postage stamp and should be viewed through a strong magnifying glass; the tea pot is less than one half inch high, both the cream pitcher and the sugar basket are one quarter inch high each and the tray is one and one-sixteenth inches wide. A single tea pot, another Jacob Hurd design, stands only one quarter inch high. Other sterling silver miniatures sold by Mr. Fisher are copied from hallmarked eighteenth century English originals. One French item is a chocolate pot, one half inch high, copied from an original (Paris, 1784), now in the Louis Carre collection.

Miss Ellen Ballon, the Canadian pianist, who toured Europe regularly before the war and was in the United States in 1942 has, among other miniatures, a collection of seventy-five pieces of silver. Her first acquisition was a group of six service plates, exact replicas of Chippendale pie crust plates from the George II period, found in London. These plates were the beginning of a collection of silver that now includes a complete dining room service for six, each item in sterling. After her first purchase, she sought out obscure shops for other objects. On a subsequent tour through the British Isles, she found in the north of Scotland flatware modeled after eighteenth century Old English, pistol handled knives, forks and spones. Near Dingle Bay, in Ireland, she discovered a miniature Irish punch bowl from the George III period. On her return to the United States, she added a complete silver teaset of the George III period. Most of the Ballon silver is of the Georgian period: candelabra, shell mint dishes, champagne goblets, peppers and salts, a toast rack, mustard pot, and spoon, champagne buckets, water pitcher, a stein, chafing dish and sugar dredger. One Queen Anne period piece is a silver tea tray and set composed of teapot, hot water jug, sugar basin, cream and strainer on stand.

In her precious metal group are a heavy gold chalice, a gold piano, one pair of bronze candlesticks and a platinum bird cage on a stand, the cage decorated with diamonds and containing a small gold bird.

Her admirers know of her miniatures and frequently send her examples of craftsmanship on a small scale. Recently she received an anonymous gift of a number of miniature charms, a piano with a top which opens, some jumbo characters and a number of mechanical gadgets, all affixed to a chain.

Chicago's most famous dancing coach and trainer of such outstanding dancers as Harriet Hctor, Ginger Rogers, Marilyn Miller, Florence O'Denishawn, Mary Eaton and the Duncan Sisters, is also a silver reproduction enthusiast. The name of Merriel Abbott is well known among the dancing world and also among collectors for her excellent and compact collection. Miss Abbott prefers the one inch scale and displays her possessions in a neat cabinet constructed for the purpose.

Since childhood, Mrs. Alice B. Pedder of Los Angeles, California, has treasured a small collection of thirty-five silver minia-



tures which were given to her as toys. The finest piece is a sleigh with a coach body. Four horses, not more than half an inch high are harnessed to it with silver wire, two outriders are riding them. The coach has a decorative figure where the coachman's seat would be and a tiny footman straddles a seat at the rear. Coach windows are of isinglass and the roof of the cab is on hinges so one can look inside and see a man lolling on the broad seat of the coach. A dining room set consisting of a table, sofa, two arm chairs and three straight chairs was a souvenir of the coronation of Queen Wilhelmina and has the coat of arms of The Netherlands on the back of the chairs and sofa and on top of the table. Two of the pieces could be put to utilitarian use; the coffee pot is a pepper shaker and the old time lamp is a cigar lighter; it has a small tank for oil and a spout to hold a wick. This is a model of an old Scotch type standing lamp which stood on a stand about six feet from the floor and looked like a tea pot with an open flame coming from the spout, similar in appearance to the Betty lamp of early American days.

Mrs. Pedder's largest miniature, four inches high, is an old English figure of an ancient forester with the cross bow in his hand. She also has a large collection of silver charms but does not consider these as part of her silver reproductions. Among her unusual silver miniatures are a stall, one and one-eighth inches high, with hearts on the shelves and hanging from the roof with one cupid acting as salesman, the other as purchaser; a printing press with four figures grouped around it, each about one inch high; a Dutch dog cart with the figure of a boy in the car, the dog is about five-eighths of an inch high; and two musical silver objects, a grand piano, seven-eighths inches high, and a violin with silver strings, two and seven-eighths inches long. There are also objects representing a woman at a cradle; a spinning wheel, a windmill, a bird house with two children beside it and a wheelbarrow.

Another larger collection, about which little information is available, belongs to Mrs. Olin Wellborn III of Los Angeles. Of the one hundred pieces owned by this collector, the choicest pieces are designated as a fitted secretary bookcase with a slant front, glazed doors and sides; a French style bed purchased in Montreal; and a sofa with five matching chairs of English sterling silver in the Louis XVI style.

Like so many other collectors of miscellaneous miniatures,

Mrs. Florence Cranston became intrigued with sterling silver objects and has a small but fine collection including salt and pepper shakers, one-eighth inch high, plates, cups and saucers, sugar tongs, sugar shell, a punch bowl with ladle and six tiny silver cups, all of sterling.

Several years ago, while traveling in England, Constance F. Furbush of Portland, Maine, saw the famous dolls' house made for Queen Mary of England. For months afterward, she carried in her mind the picture of this perfect miniature palace with its exquisite furniture and costly fittings. One of her friends, noticing her interest in miniatures, presented her with a teakwood mouse and suggested that she start a collection of watch charms. She was delighted with the idea and for five years her collection has grown steadily and now includes an assortment of watch charms.

To interest Miss Furbush, a miniature must represent a useful or beautiful object or a living creature. She specializes in gold objects but also has collected over a hundred silver pieces, having several made of other metals. Some of the charms are musical instruments, animals, bicycles, vases, books, keys, telephones, dishes, boats, insects, opera glasses with views inserted, old fashioned skates, gardeners' and carpenters' tools and firemen's equipment. One of the quaintest items is a pair of old high-buttoned shoes in gold with pointed toes and cuban heels. Most of these charms are antiques but since the war she has decided to include modern charms intended for bracelets. Her finest acquisitions were purchased in Maine during the depression when family treasures, were melted down for old gold. It has been Miss Furbush's good fortune to save some of them from the melting pot. Her most valuable watch charm is a gold and mother-of-pearl fan with filigree work.

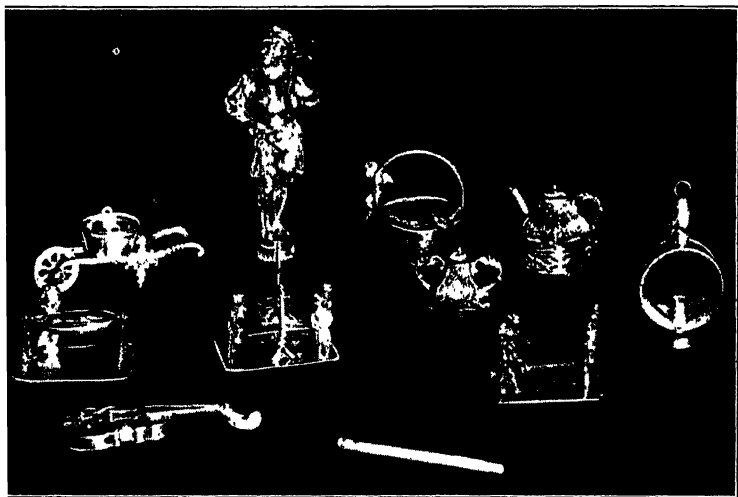
Each charm is mounted in a cabinet containing large shallow drawers lined with dark felt and divided into compartments, the whole being covered with a thin sheet of glass. The miniatures range from a half an inch to two inches in size; but most of them are less than an inch long. Each object is cataloged in a card index file kept in the same cabinet with the collection. Although the Furbush watch charms are well known among collectors in Maine, their owner has yet to exhibit them outside her native state.

Miss Louise Huntington Jarvis of Granville, Michigan, is a collector of buttons and antiques but also has a small collection of

metal miniatures. Several years ago a friend gave her a silver chain which her mother had brought from Europe forty years previously. In each important European city, this friend of her mother had purchased a silver souvenir and had attached it to the chain; a gondola from Venice, a windmill from Amsterdam, two monks from Notre Dame, an 'Iron Maiden' from Berne.

In Boston, on Boylston street is the shop of Guglielmo Cini whose best known miniatures were made for Colleen Moore's Dolls' House. Mr. Cini has also made a number of metal and jeweled miniatures for Mrs. Frederick Hicks of Boston. Mrs. Hicks purchased a silver teaset, a pair of French andirons in silver gilt, book ends, frames, mirrors and many other objects from him. Her collection consists of period rooms, reputed to be as fine as any produced by Mrs. Thorne. However, Mrs. Hicks does not allow any pictures to be taken, nor is she willing to supply information about her rooms.

Mr. Cini hesitates to make miniatures except by commission as he feels it is very important to him to maintain the high standard of excellence he has displayed in pieces made for the Moore Dolls' House. For the less exacting collector of metal miniatures, gift, curio and antique shops and even some drug stores in the



*The teakettle on stand is perfect in detail. Collection of Mrs. Alice B. Pedder.*

larger cities display small objects of silver, not sterling, imitation copper and gold, ranging from campfires and covered wagons to cocktail shakers and goblets. These items, made in huge quantities for distribution, lack craftsmanship but serve a purpose; new miniature collectors who wish to experiment in the field may purchase a few of these objects to test their interest in the hobby before risking a larger amount of money on more expensive hand chased metal pieces. For example, Nancy Madlener, a Chicagoan, began to purchase relatively inexpensive pieces. When her father, Albert Madlener, Jr., was convinced of her interest in miniatures, he bought finer pieces for her; a pair of silver salt and pepper shakers, a Georgian plate, a pair of silver candlesticks, a nutcracker and four nut picks, a complete coffee service on a tray, a silver-plated punch bowl set and several other types of silver work. All these silver items are displayed in a hanging case but the owner plans to set them in a table with a magnifying glass top.

Many fine metal miniatures have recently been made available to collectors through regular antique shop sources. Since the second World War, a steady stream of refugees have made the voyage to the United States, bringing with them as many of their valuables, jewels and small objects, as it had been possible for them to secret on their person. Large size heirlooms could not be concealed and were confiscated when refugees tried to send them out of their native countries. As a result, many antique shops in port cities in the United States and Canada, even shops as far west as Chicago, have been able to purchase original French, German, Austrian, Polish and Spanish metal miniatures, and while the supply is not plentiful, the enthusiastic collector will find a few real "gems" that he may never have been able to purchase under other circumstances.



*A section of the Meyers shop engaged in making "Miniature Reproductions."*

## Chapter IV

### *Dealers and Craftsmen*

Unless there be considerably more research on the subject, it is doubtful whether a conclusive answer can be given to the question: Why were miniatures made in the past? Records are not complete and further facts about miniature objects may never be discovered. There is something to be said for all interpretations: many miniatures were originally made as children's toys, and as sales samples, small scale versions of regular sized pieces of furniture or armament, and others as demonstrations of a craftsman's desire to show how minutely he could work.

Small furniture has been made in England and on the continent from the Middle Ages to our own days, some miniatures dating back to the time of the feudal barons. In the seventeenth century, adults took a fancy to models of chests of drawers, dishes, and cupboards, using them as containers for jewelry and trinkets; models from this period exist in England today, while relatively few American historical miniatures have survived; Hepplewhite and Sheraton styles are almost non-existent, some Queen Anne and Chippendale styles can be found; but late Empire and Early Victorian miniatures fashioned by American craftsmen are plentiful. There are two reasons for this abundance; firstly, the earliest models are scarcely a century and a half old, secondly, many more of these small scale pieces were produced than had been previously. Desks, chest of drawers and commodes have survived best, but miniature clocks have disappeared almost entirely.

The presence of a few English toys known to have been on American soil since this country's earliest days may be due to the fact that the early colonists finally recognized the necessity of giving their children toys. In a letter written in 1695 by a certain Mr. Higgenson, he says that if toys were sent over to this country in small quantities there would surely be a sale for them. In 1712, "boxes of toys" were listed as part of the cargo brought into Boston by a privateer.

Most of the outstanding early American miniatures are owned by private collectors and until their catalogs are made public, the development of miniatures in America cannot be fully written.



*Dorothea E. Kaucher, miniature maker.*

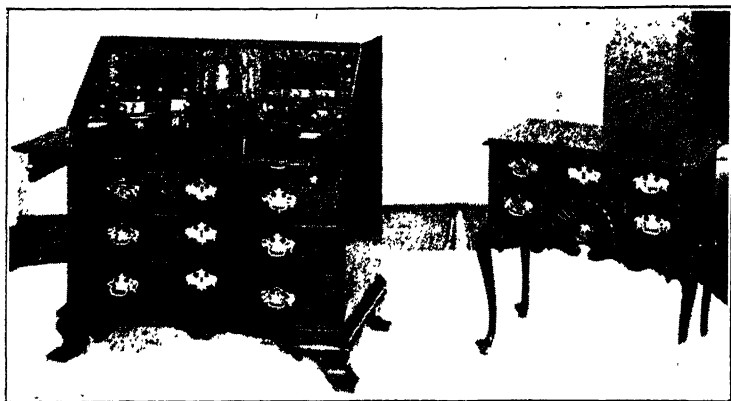
Since 1929, however, many family heirlooms have been sold to private collectors or museums.

One of the first public exhibitions of miniatures from private collections was held in the Knoedler Galleries, New York City, in December 1931, for the benefit of the Emergency Unemployment Relief Fund. Among these articles, several were of the sixteenth century; none were less than a century old, and only a few had ever been publicly exhibited. They ranged in size from almost microscopic specimens of table silver to child-sized furniture made by superior cabinet workers. Nearly all types of household furnishings were represented, including miniature oil paintings, one by Goya. Some of the outstanding pieces were an inlaid mahogany sideboard in Sheraton style, lent by D. A. Bernstein, a Sheraton table less than three inches high, with an inlaid top and ivory drawer knobs, lent by Mrs. George Howard, and a Louis XV walnut commode with delicate carving and elaborately molded handles in the style of the day, lent by Nancy McClelland. From Mrs. George F. Baker's collection was lent an eighteenth century dressing table. The top of the table opens and space is disclosed for toilet articles and a mirror. Although the table is only a few inches high the drawer fronts are ornamented with beaded molding and matched veneer. Miniature silverware, some of the pieces hall-marked, china in Royal Worcester and Lowestoft designs, glassware ranging from eighteenth century Italian pieces to pressed Sandwich glass of America, pewter bowls, candle holders, as well as brass and copper kitchen utensils, dolls, small costumed figures, and rare examples of miniature books from the collection of the late Wilbur Macey Stone were all on exhibition.

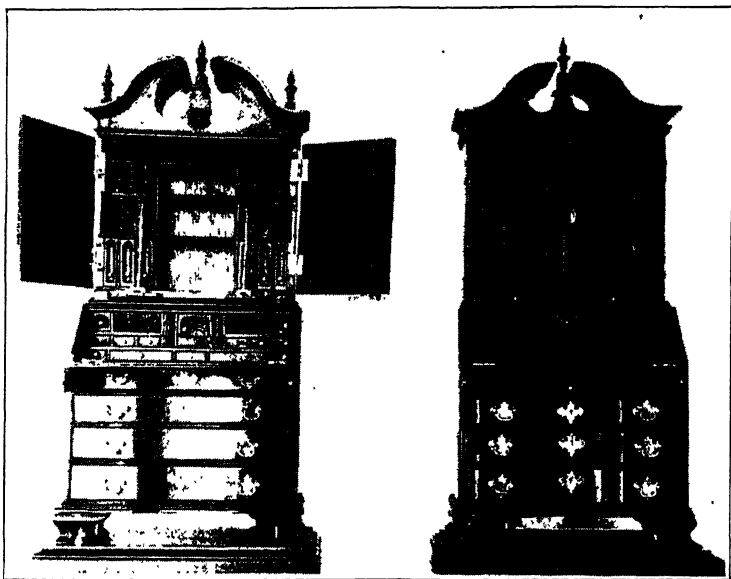
This showing stimulated interest in miniature collecting but those new to the field soon found that the prize pieces, historical miniatures, were scarce and modern small scale objects were just beginning to be made. Only in recent years some cabinet makers, glassblowers, and other artists have forsaken their regular profession to work on small scale, as the ranks of miniature collectors grow more numerous.

Each American miniature maker has his own unusual story, explaining why he or she forsook work in large to work in little. Four years ago, Miss Dorothea E. Kaucher of Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, started to make miniatures. Miss Kaucher is a commercial illustrator, and had designed several large sized screens for her clients. Her first order in small scale was for a





*Two more exquisite pieces of miniature furniture made by Edwin R. King, whose work encompassed chairs, low-boys, high-boys, tables, etc.*



*Two views of another of the exquisite miniatures made by Edwin R. King.*

miniature screen. With no tools but a coping saw purchased at her local five and ten cent store, she began to work on one thin piece of wood, cutting it into three panels. She worked every evening for weeks trying to produce the small scale object. Finally after discarding many imperfect models the screen was finished to her satisfaction.

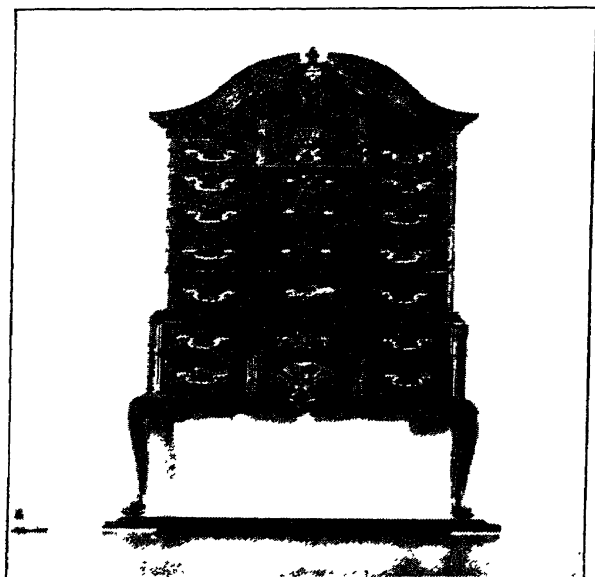
She began to experiment with harder woods, purchasing power driven tools. It was an entirely new field for her but she was determined to learn. A general knowledge of interior decoration and handicrafts had been gained from her art education but she realized that it would be necessary to study wood working, metal, glass and plastic crafts. Few of the guide books in these fields explain miniature making, so Miss Kaucher found that she must study the principles as applied to actual size objects, then adapt them to replicas on a smaller scale.

Even now that she has become proficient in her new avocation, her workroom is still as compact as when she began. In the corner of her living room hidden by a screen is a fully equipped workshop. Power tools include two lathes, several saws, routers, shapers, carvers, a drill press and so on, all precision tools made for work in miniature. The furniture and decorative accessories she makes faithfully reproduce full-size museum antiques.

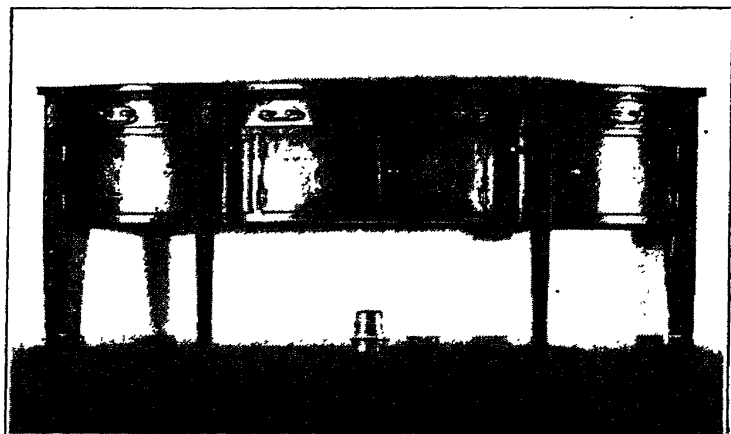
The scale of one inch to one foot is usually favored by her clients but she has already made entire rooms on a smaller scale, one half inch to a foot and one quarter inch to a foot. She used the bottom of a cigar box as the foundation for the room made on the one quarter inch scale, fitting a frame to the front so it can be hung like a picture on a wall. The walls of the model are paneled; there is a fireplace with all the fittings, an oil painting, carpet and eighteenth century furnishings, including about twenty minute vases, plates and other knick-knacks for the shelves of the cabinets.

She has made a collection of musical instruments, including eighteenth century clarinets, violins and bows in case (complete down to the rosin and extra string in the compartment of the case), cellos made of violin wood over one hundred years old and a set of drums so small that the bass drum measures one inch in diameter.

As she is anxious that her work be authentic, Miss Kaucher



*Miniature highboy, made by Edwin  
R. King.*



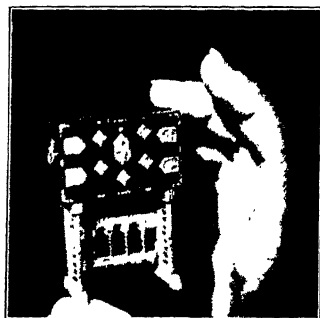
*Side-board or buffet, made by Edwin R. King.*

spends many hours in research to make certain that her reproductions are correct. For instance, when she was asked to reproduce an eighteenth century clarinet, she learned that the key arrangement of this early type clarinet was quite different from the arrangement of the modern instrument. She searched unsuccessfully for illustrations or models in Philadelphia; but a musical instrument house sent her as models two rare clarinets of the period. Miss Kaucher prefers to construct small musical instruments rather than other miniatures; her violin has been ordered by many collectors.

One of the first museum pieces copied was a pair of flintlock pistols with accessories in a case. The Philadelphia museums did not have suitable sets for reproduction but she heard about a pair of pistols owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Unable to make a trip to this museum, she worked from a photograph and data supplied to her concerning the color of the lining of the case and the type of wood used for accessories. Her usual procedure for reproducing antiques is similar to the technique used by Mr. Meyers, the silversmith. First, she sketches the article from the original and if possible secures photographs. Then she reduces all measurements to proper scale and makes detailed working drawings before starting the actual construction. One of her orders was for a billiard table scaled one half inch to a foot. She wanted pictures as a guide and wrote to a manufacturing company for their catalog. Then there was the problem of getting balls the correct size. For these she used bird shot, taken from inside a dressmaker's weight, painting and numbering each ball.

In trying to reproduce china and pottery, Miss Kaucher found that modern plastics were the best materials because she can turn them on the lathe; in this manner she has been able to make such things as cups and saucers measuring as little as a quarter of an inch in diameter. Even the smallest pieces of china are hand painted with clear flower motifs, although she never uses a magnifying glass for her work. She makes a specialty of decorations for miniature rooms. For example, she has constructed an imperial coach, copied from a museum piece, which is used as an accessory on the mantel in a miniature room. The gilded coach, measuring less than an inch in length, is hollow and has glass windows.

Another interesting problem occurred when she was asked



*16th Century Vargueno, or desk. Inside is elaborately finished.  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch to 1 foot scale. By Dorothea E. Kaucher.*



*Drum set. Bass drum 1 inch in diameter.—By Dorothea E. Kaucher.*

to reproduce a Gobelin tapestry. After much experimenting, she developed an unusual technique of painting on poplin which gives the appearance of real tapestry.

The most intricate piece made by Miss Kaucher is a replica of Columbus' *Santa Maria* which is fifteen-sixteenths of an inch long. Rigged with number one thousand thread, the ship has different level decks, ladders, coils of rope, hatch cover and rear lantern. For protection, this historical reproduction has been mounted on a turned base and covered with a glass dome.

Miss Kaucher is not only a miniature maker but a collector as well, for she makes duplicates of all her orders; she was a collector before she began constructing miniatures. Her interest in the field dates from her childhood when she owned an elaborate dolls' house. When it became necessary to sell the house because of lack of space, she began to furnish another dolls' house as a hobby. When looking for suitable furnishings, she found they were either too crudely made or not in scale, so having had some experience in building aeroplane and ship models in her spare time, she tried cabinet making on a miniature scale. Her initial workshop was the top of her writing desk, razor blades and sandpaper for tools and balsa wood for lumber. The first pieces were crude but the work gave her experience for her later activity in the field. Recognition of Miss Kaucher's craftsmanship has already been made in several Philadelphia newspaper articles, radio talks over Station WOR and in a motion picture made by Universal Studios for their *Stranger than Fiction* series.

Within two years, the Cranford Miniatures made in Pleasantville, New York, by Percy F. Tompkins have become known to more than two thousand miniature collectors in whose collections there are anywhere from several to more than a dozen different Cranford miniature models. In 1940, Mr. Tompkins was advised by his doctor to retire from active business for a year. During that period of rest, Mr. Tompkins pursued his interest in antiques. For many years previous to his short retirement, he had collected regular size antiques, refinishing and re-upholstering them. To occupy his time during absence from his business, Mr. Tompkins decided to make doll house furniture for his daughter. Within a few months, he had reproduced, on the scale of one inch to the foot, a complete set of period furniture. Among the friends who saw his handiwork were several who encouraged him to show the miniature furniture at local exhibitions. The favorable



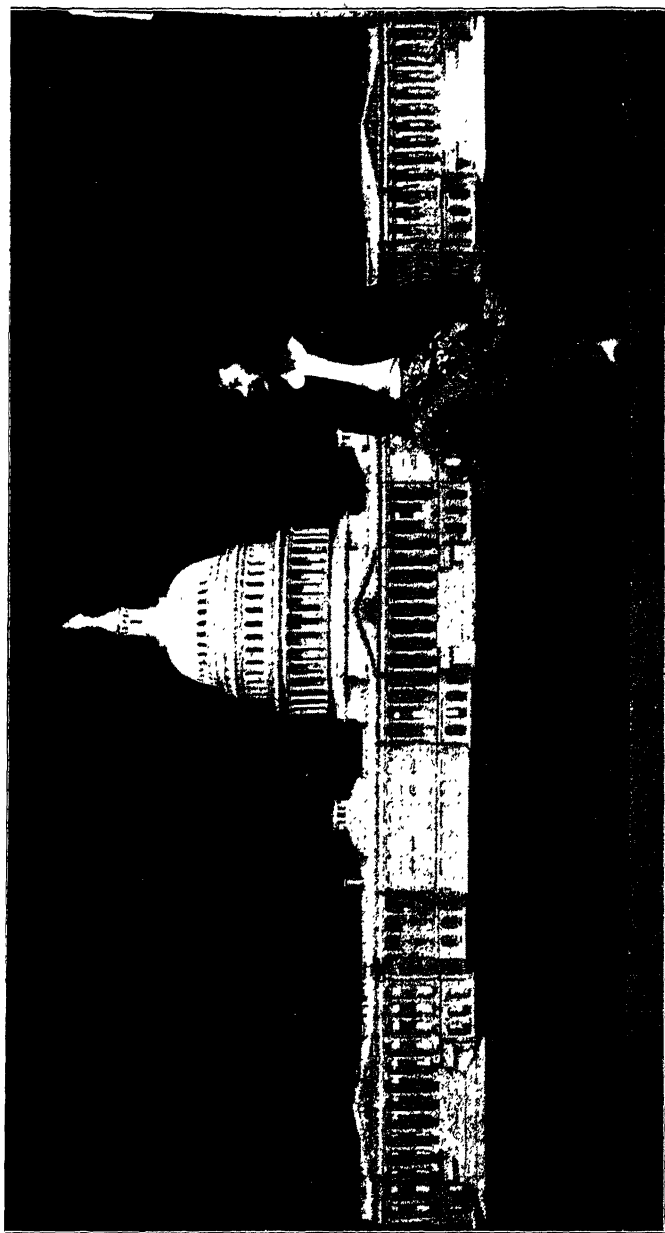
*William Gorski, now Staff Sergeant, U. S. Air Corps, a maker of miniature models, with some products of his craft.*

reaction of the visitors to these shows led him to advertise nationally in *Hobbies* magazine. The response from these advertisements was immediate, and although he is once again engaged in business during the day, he spends his leisure time designing new miniatures and copying antiques to fill orders for collectors. Many hours have been spent by Mr. and Mrs. Tompkins visiting museums to secure the type of design that lends itself to miniature reproduction. Pennsylvania Dutch pieces have furnished many ideas. At present there are thirty miniature Cranford reproductions of museum pieces in Chippendale, Empire, Pennsylvania Dutch, and Victorian Styles. Each month, new items are added to the collection. Mr. Tompkins also copies special pieces for collectors, using sketches as guides. Anxious to find ways of making miniature collections more complete, Cranford Miniatures have enlisted the services of a glass blower who makes pitchers and lamps which harmonize with the designs of the furniture. Miss Elvira Hokanson, a young artist specializing in flower paintings, has done many flower water colors designed to harmonize with the furniture.

Prior to his retirement, the Supervisor of Manual Arts in the New Bedford public schools, the late Edwin R. King, worked for years in restoring antiques and constructing old pieces, using prints and sketches as a guide. Before the first World War, Mr. King had already made about fifteen pieces of full size furniture. The most striking articles were in a set of four, a highboy, a lowboy, a mirror for the lowboy and a small table. The highboy is an exact replica of an old English walnut highboy, dating back to 1750, and stands over seven feet in height. .

Since he was 19 years old, Mr. King had been interested in antiques. After his retirement in 1926, he became interested in reproducing antiques in miniature. In 1937, a New York furniture store, W. and J. Sloane Company, invited him to exhibit some of his miniature work, an unsolicited tribute to his craftsmanship. Ten miniature secretaries, highboys, lowboys, and Governor Winthrop desks were shown during the holiday season in one of the store's Fifth Avenue windows. The highboys are made of eighty pieces of mahogany each, besides having five brass escutcheon plates and sixteen brass drawer pulls. There are eleven drawers in each highboy, all with center guides. Making dovetails in a drawer about half the size of a postage stamp is no easy task but almost every joint in the small furniture exhibited is dovetailed.



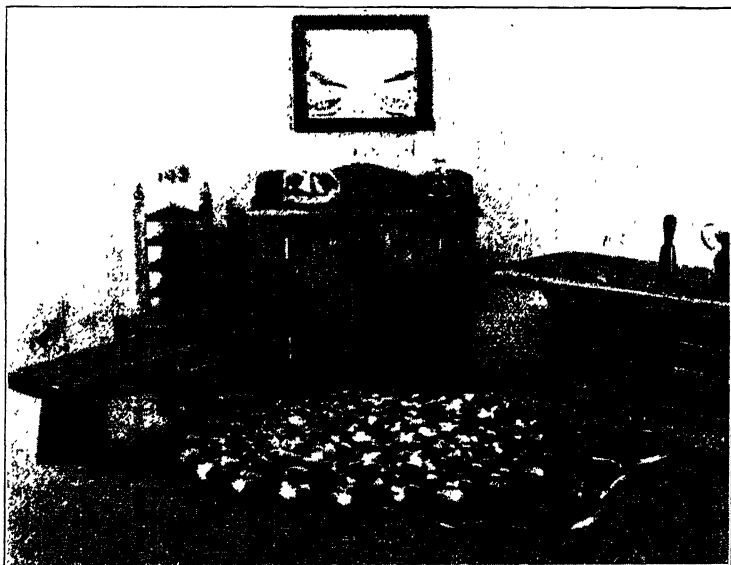


*United States Capital model displayed at Treasury Center in 1943 at Commonwealth Edison Company's main Chicago store. It was built by Walter I. McDonell, Indiana, and is accurate in detail.*

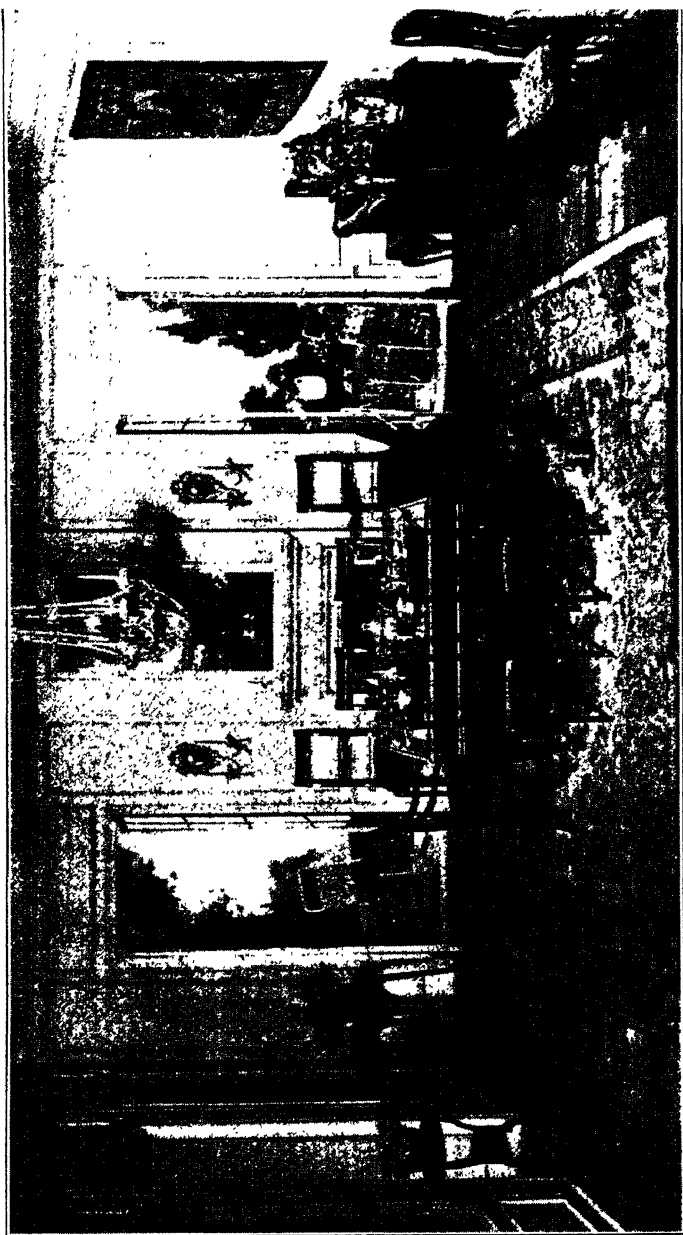
His reproduction of the Governor Winthrop desk, also on the scale of one inch to the foot, is only three inches in height yet it has forty-one drawers and boxes, including several secret compartments. Carvings on some of the drawer fronts and over the pigeonholes are very small and were incised by adapted dentist's instruments.

Mr. King's work was not always in the one inch to one foot scale. His first reproductions were a highboy and a lowboy, three inches to the foot scale, both exhibited in Boston twelve years ago. Although somewhat outside the miniature field, one of his later reproductions on the one inch scale is worthy of mention:— a 59 inch model of Butler's Flat lighthouse in New Bedford Harbor, Buzzard's Bay. Mr. King constructed the model as well as the furniture for the lighthouse office, eighteen pieces in all.

Two Sheraton sideboards were completed and knife boxes were being made at the time of Mr. King's death. Complete records of all his furniture have been kept; nearly one thousand are recorded, many by photographs. Regular size and miniatures



*Miniatures as made by Cranford Miniatures.*



*Miniature room belonging to Clare Marks.*

alike, when space permitted, were carved with the legend "King-Made" and the date; for some small models this mark was shortened to "K-M".

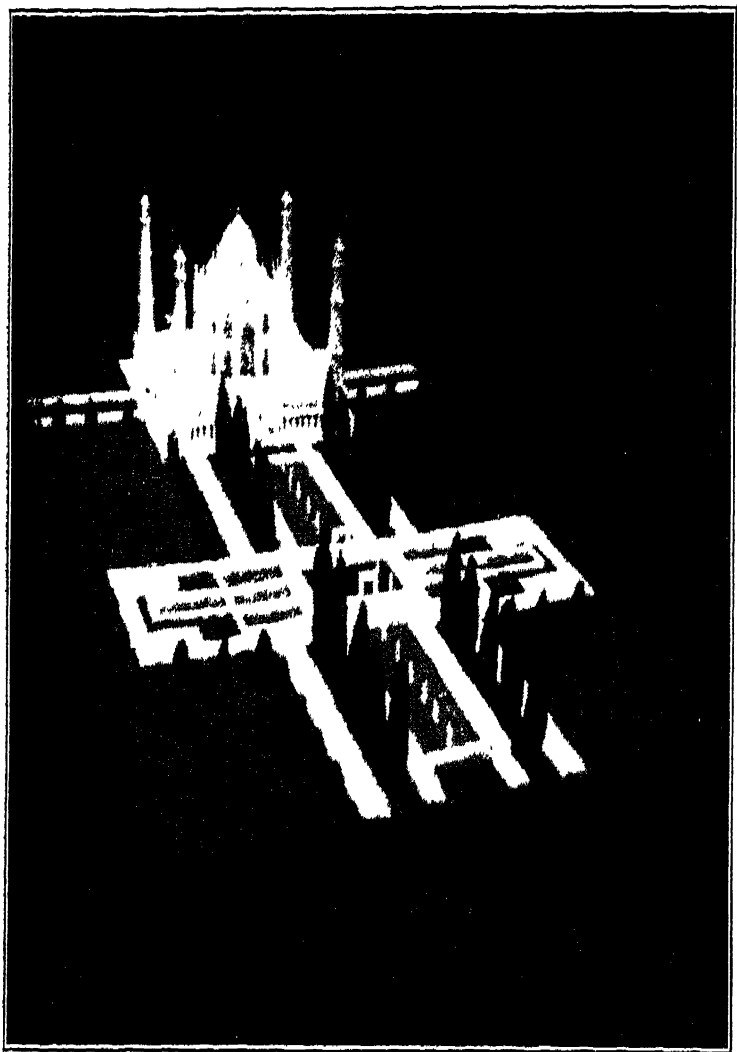
In addition to the recognition received through exhibitions in New York and Boston, he received the blue ribbon award in 1938 at the New Bedford Hobby Show. Examples of this craftsman's work in wood have found their way into collections all over the United States and also Canada; Ellen Ballou, whose collection is described, has one of the King-Made miniatures. Occasionally he constructed metal room accessories such as brass candlesticks but these pieces were produced in small quantities as Mr. King worked primarily in wood.

John Allen of West Englewood, New Jersey, is another cabinet maker whose work, until recently, has been entirely regular size antiques. A short time ago, in his spare moments he reproduced, in miniature, a colonial ladder back chair, three inches high with a one inch seat woven in hemp. Mr. Allen has been encouraged to continue in the miniature field as a result of the favorable response to an advertisement placed in *Hobbies* magazine. He has already copied the colonial chair in a limited quantity, sizes ranging from one inch to two inch seats.

Some of the most expert miniature hand turning in wood, bone and ivory available to collectors today has been made by Frederick W. Hosbach of Narberth, Pennsylvania. Examples of his work were presented by Mr. Hosbach to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. One exhibit shows six textile implements demonstrating the domestic preparation of spinning and winding of flax; all these pieces are of turned ivory.

Since her childhood, Mary Louise Benham of Jackson, Michigan, has made small furniture for her own dolls' house and later for the dolls' house of her children. Now that she is a dealer in miniature furnishings, there is not time enough for her to construct all her orders so she has engaged Arthur Knight of Barre, Vermont, to make the furniture; Miss Benham still makes small lamps and other room accessories. Most of her work is custom made, copied from sketches, photographs or detailed descriptions.

One of New York's best known dealers is Clare Marks of Alice H. Marks, antiques. Before the war, Miss Marks saw miniature collections in European museums, period rooms, dolls' houses



*This miniature of the Taj Mahal was made by Willard Simpson of Virginia. Over 300 years ago in Agra, India, the Shah Jehan ordered this tomb built to contain the body of his dead wife, Mumtaz Mahal, and to commemorate their life. The Taj Mahal is made of white alabaster.*

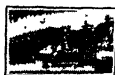
and miscellaneous objects. She was intrigued by them and began to buy individual pieces of furniture and accessories, limiting her purchases to the finest type of miniature work then available. Accuracy of scale was another consideration foremost in her mind. Then, by chance, she met one of the craftsmen who had worked on many of the furnishings used in the doll's house of Queen Mary. She engaged him to construct pieces for her own collection and also for her clients. Now Miss Marks has two beautiful period rooms, a living room and dining room of the eighteenth century. Besides these rooms, she has several fine individual pieces, a walnut highboy, and tapestry chairs. The present list of objects in miniature for clients includes a wig stand, old English buffet, a burl walnut highboy, an eighteenth century washstand, a gateleg table, a two tier wood dumbwaiter and a knee hole desk.

### *Miniature Etchings, Sculpture and Silhouettes.*

Miniature prints are no innovation, for as long ago as the so-called *Little Masters*, small prints were produced. The widespread interest in this field, however, is recent and was initiated largely in the middle west by the Chicago Society of Etchers and in the east, by the Society of American Etchers. These Societies developed in answer to a demand by the public for representative prints by well known artists in a price range within the reach of the collector with moderate means. Collectors are not interested in casual sketches at a reasonable price and inferior quality; they want the high quality found in larger examples. By making miniature prints, reducing the size of his plate or block, yet keeping up his standard, the time expended on the creation of the print is so much less that the artist may establish a more reasonable price for his work and fill the need.

The Chicago Society of Etchers' first exhibition of miniature prints was held in 1937. The Society of American Etchers entered the field soon afterward and in their annual exhibitions for the past three years have had a special miniature print section with an average of one hundred and twenty-five artists contributing to this section of the show.

Both Societies differ as to the requirements of what constitutes a miniature print. The Chicago Society allows the largest dimension to be five inches, while the Society of American Etchers limits theirs to three inches. It is merely a matter of opinion but the latter Society believes that by establishing a smaller limit



*Two miniature etchings by John Taylor Arms. This is the exact size. It must be said here that the halftone process of reproducing illustrations is not well suited to show the nicety of these etchings. The halftone process cuts up the etchings with vertical and horizontal lines.*



*M. Potvin with his collection of hand carved dogs.*

they create a distinctive class rather than one composed of small prints.

The interest of the President of the Society of American Etchers, John Taylor Arms, in this field is longstanding. Anything minute has always had a fascination for him and although he lays no claim to being a collector of such items, he has picked up, from time to time, examples of the smallest prints by various printmakers. His first acquisition was a group of six etchings by Maxime Lalanne. With his strong predilection for all things miniature, it was a natural development for him to make tiny plates. At first, these were largely done for his annual Christmas card and were larger than his most recent prints. This work in miniature, presenting compositional and technical difficulties amounted to an artistic dare and the effort to meet that dare was hard work, instructive, and creatively satisfying.

The first time Mr. Arms considered his work as possible material for publication was when Sir Neville Wilkinson asked him to make a print for *Titania's Palace*. During the New York World's Fair, this Arms print hung over the mantelpiece in the Prince's bedroom. It is entitled *Chartres in Miniature* and measures one half inch by thirteen-sixteenths of an inch. Other artists in this field envy the gem-like quality of Mr. Arms' work and his ability to work on such a small scale.

A third organization in this field is the Miniature Print Society of Kansas City, Missouri, founded by Alfred Fowler in 1941. This Society is commercial rather than artistic as in the case of the two previously mentioned groups. Mr. Fowler has limited his membership to two hundred persons who may or may not be printmakers. For an annual membership fee of \$10.00, all those belonging to the Miniature Print Society receive three or more prints each year. Mr. Fowler has also arranged to circulate two exhibitions of miniature prints wherever there is a demand for their showing.

Some of the prints already released by the Miniature Print Society include a wood engraving by Asa Cheffetz, two and three-eighths by three and three-eighths, an etching by Morris Henry Hobbs and an original dry-point by James Swann who is the secretary-treasurer of the Chicago Society of Etchers. The third print for 1942 presented to the members of the Society was a modelers for fashioning images of their gods, figures to be



few outstanding artists in that field. It is rare that editions of mezzotints run to the two hundred required, but Valerio personally printed the edition, thus securing perfect proofs throughout. The fourth and final print for 1942, was an etching of a Spanish scene by Sir Lionel Lindsay of Sydney, Australia, who was knighted for his artistic endeavors.

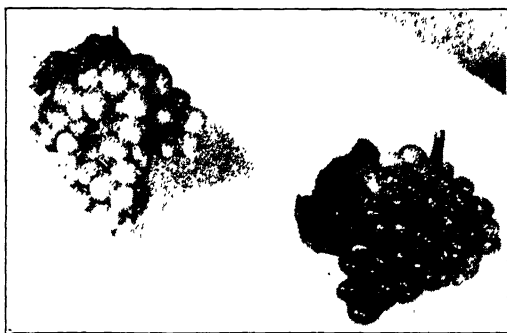
The ranks of artists producing miniature prints is growing. Among present well known printmakers are Thomas W. Nason of Lyme, Connecticut, Arthur W. Heintzelman, Marblehead, Massa-



*Mrs. Helen B. Cook, wax sculptor.*

chusetts, Lyman Byxbe, Estes Park, Colorado, Reynold F. Weidener of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Lee Sturges of Elmhurst, Illinois.

Several sculptors, formerly accustomed to working in a large scale, have adapted their work in smaller sizes to bring their pieces within the reach of people whose living space prevents possession of larger objects. Cecil Howard is an exponent of this school and has produced groups and single pieces about two inches high, a few of them as high as six inches. They are modeled with the same strength and richness of volume found in this artist's life-size figures. As a matter of fact, the limited size has one distinct advantage. Violence of action which might be fatiguing to the eye on a larger scale can be reproduced well in small scale. Mr. Howard has chosen many of his subjects from the field of sports, wrestling, ice-hockey, skating, archery, fencing and diving.



*Close-up of bunches of grapes, by Mrs. Helen B. Cook, wax sculptor.*

Although not a trained artist, the work of an obscure Mexican silhouette cutter, José Furlon, is included in the miniature collections of Jack Norworth, Mrs. Raymond Hughes and Emanuel Karman. Both Mr. Norworth and Mrs. Hughes have single examples of this man's work, but Mr. Karman lays claim to possessing the largest collection of Furlon's silhouettes consisting of a variety of subjects such as circuses, bull fights, racing and hunting scenes. He never used a magnifying glass in his work. There is no written information concerning Senor Furlon; although collectors who visited Mexico several decades ago recall him well.



*Armored warrior in miniature. Montgomery  
Evans.*

This artist has been dead for twenty years but to this date no other craftsman has approached his wizardry with a pair of scissors.

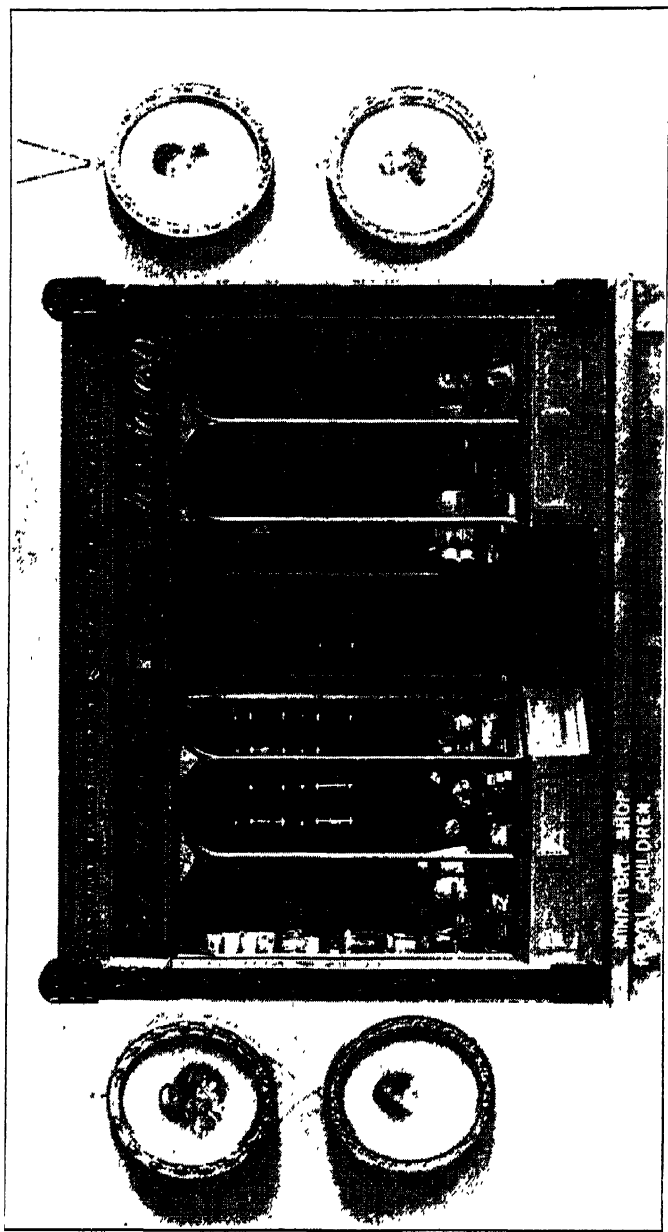
### *Wax Miniatures*

From time immemorial, wax has been the material used by modelers for fashioning images of their gods, figures to be placed in graves, dolls for children and other miscellaneous decorative objects. Through the Middle Ages, small wax objects were made to serve as religious offerings; wax images of hated persons were fashioned, into which long pins were thrust in the belief that the person would suffer corresponding injuries.

Less insidious wax objects were used during Roman times. The closing days of the Saturnalia were known as Sigillaria on account of the custom of making presents of wax fruit fashioned by the Sigillarii, manufacturers of small figures in wax and other materials. In more recent times, some twenty years ago, the buffet or dining room table in the average middle class American home was considered not well arranged if the bowl in the center of the lace runner was not piled with wax grapes, oranges, bananas, pears or peaches. From Roman times, wax statuettes have been made. In modern times, three generations of a New Orleans family have developed this art to a high degree. Their figurines, usually less than eight inches in height depict typical New Orleans characters, street criers of magnolias, fish and pralines. Wax figures also are commonly used in dioramas displayed at museums, fairs and conventions.

In the miniature field, the outstanding craftsman at the present time who works in wax is Mrs. Helen B. Cook of Joliet, Illinois. Examples of her work are included among the miniatures of hundreds of collectors. With no training as a sculptor, her experience as a housewife and cook has made it possible for Mrs. Cook to fashion in wax realistic Thanksgiving dinners, afternoon tea tables complete with petit fours, Sunday night cold suppers and many other mouth-watering instances of her artistic ability. Her only tools are a nut pick, jack-knife, toothbrush, small pliers and a paper punch.

This hobby dates back to 1930 when her two daughters, Doris and Virginia, received sets of modeling wax for Christmas. The unskilled children did their best to twist the pliable material in appetizing shapes for their dolls. Mrs. Cook recalls how they

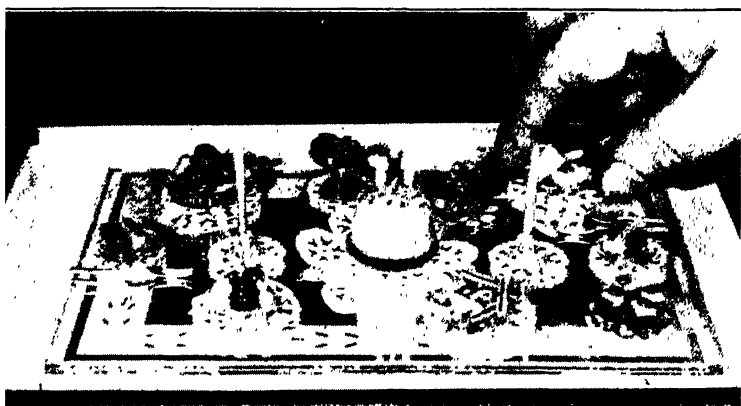


*A typical old time shop in miniature was one of the playthings of the English royal children during the Victorian era.*

brought the tangled mass of wax to her and, with child-like faith, expected her to make realistic slices of watermelon which, they insisted, their dolls wanted. Willing to do her best to solve the problem, Mrs. Cook pinched off a small quantity of the pink wax, added a narrow strip of white, a thinner coating of green to represent the rind, dotted the pink wax with tiny flecks of black for seeds and there was the watermelon. Her two daughters were delighted.

Soon the children were back again with more requests. They were certain that the watermelon had only whetted their dolls' appetite for more wax food. Mrs. Cook taught the girls how to make their own toy food, refurnishing the wax supply from time to time. By the following year, 1931, Virginia, working under her mother's direction, had an unusual Christmas present for her younger sister, Doris, a doll's restaurant well stocked with all varieties of sweets in miniature, ice cream, chocolate covered cake, doughnuts and lollipops.

Mr. and Mrs. Cook saw possibilities in making more elaborate food miniatures and immediately purchased, from their local store, all the remaining supplies of holiday wax modeling sets. When that source of supply was exhausted, Mrs. Cook wrote to wax manufacturers. Meanwhile a miniature bakery shop and florist's shop had taken form. The manufacturers requested pictures of her handiwork and were so pleased that they immediately commissioned her to prepare a display for the Indiana State Fair of 1932. Later, she made special exhibits for Marshall Field and



*Miniature table setting with food done in wax by Mrs. Helen B. Cook*

Company in Chicago and other large department stores in the United States. Finally, Mrs. Cook was invited to show her products at the Chicago World's Fair, and the New York Fair. She relates that during one hot summer day the flood lights illuminating the wax display were placed too near the wax turkey, cranberry sauce, dressing, peas and carrots and before the eyes of the visitors the firm wax melted into puddles of tangled colors. Not much more than a badly stained tablecloth encrusted with a thick layer of wax remained after the accident. A replica of this Thanksgiving table is now in the alcove of her basement which Mr. Cook has built as a display room for his wife's wax works. This second table is made of a new type of wax which has a considerably higher melting point. In addition, all the wax reproductions are now shellacked with a preparation which serves as a protective film against heat.

It is only since late in 1939 that Mrs. Cook has been making what she would call real miniatures. Her accomplishments during the past two years have been of a more exacting nature. Her first efforts were not made to scale. Now she is working on the scale of one inch to a foot, displaying her wax food in settings of this size. The food dishes are not made of wax. These are buttons,

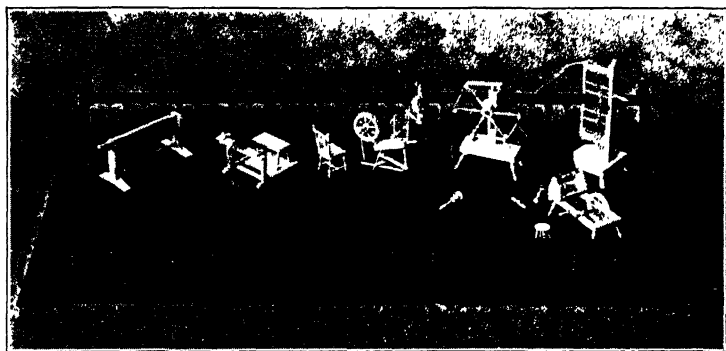


*Miniatures as made by Cranford Miniatures.*

beads and bits of glass. Crystal beads from old chandeliers form the stems of some of her fruit bowls. Transparent and colored opaque beads and buttons are glued together to make dishes.

The furniture in these settings is modern in character, chromium tubing chairs and divans covered with felt. The manufacturer of this furniture ordered from Mrs. Cook a doll's house in which different models of their product could be displayed. Miss Virginia Cook built a white cardboard shell, from a design of a modern four room house, furnishing the interior with small mirrors, pictures, draperies, lamps and a modern fireplace in the living room. Vases of flowers and bowls of candies and nuts were reproduced in wax by Mrs. Cook, who also dressed several dolls in wax clothes and fashioned curly gold and brown locks of wax for these model children. The exterior of the house has several interesting details. A child's playyard with swings and a slide occupies one corner of the yard. At the opposite end of the yard, separated by an attractive swimming pool, is a garden, with proud turkeys strutting around among the wax clothes put on the line to dry.

On one of the shelves in this basement display room is a white kitchen cabinet, less than a foot high. When the doors are opened, stores of canned foods come to view, cans of condensed milk, soups, vegetables and pork and beans line the shelves. They are all popular brands and the labels are exact reduced facsimiles of the regular sized cans. Mrs. Cook has also been fortunate in securing



*Miniature textile implements, illustrating the domestic preparation of spinning and winding of flax, turned of ivory by donor, Frederick W. Hosbach.*



several one inch high Mason jars which she has filled with wax cherries and other preserved fruits and vegetables.

One type of wax food container which she likes to point out are the diminutive "wooden" fruit bowls. These were found by Dayle, her three year old granddaughter. Walking through the woods with her grandfather, she spied a few acorns on the ground and insisted on bringing them back to "grandma to use for dishes." The tops of the acorns made attractive bowls, just the right size.

The smallest wax miniature she has ever made is a jar of baked beans which in spite of its size looks like a most appetizing thimbleful of Boston's favorite dish. For those who like home-made pies, Mrs. Cook has fashioned a tempting custard pie. The dainty strings of cocoanut on the top are tinged with a delicate brown color, giving them a toasted appearance; the crust looks flaky and light, and the custard pudding shows just the right color and consistency where a piece of the pie has been removed.

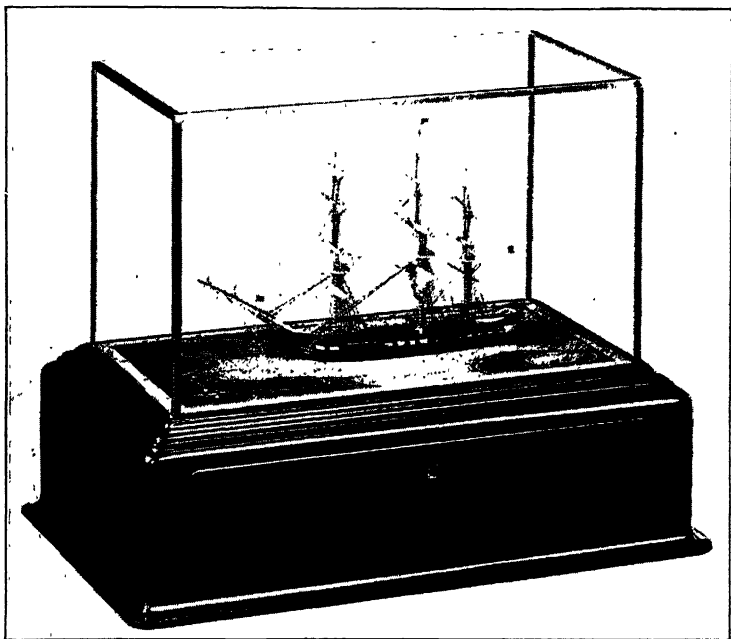
The only venture outside the field of reproducing food in miniature occurred several years ago when a wax manufacturer sent Mrs. Cook a glass aquarium. He asked that she fill it with a suitable background and tropical fish. Neither she nor any member of her family had ever raised fish, but after a few visits to nearby aquariums and hours of studying books on fish, Mrs. Cook set about making wax guppies, Chinese Moors, Angel fish and Butterfly fish and other extravagantly colored tropical fish for the aquarium. It was sent to Marshall Field and Company in Chicago as part of an exhibit of educational toys.

Different varieties of fruit present difficult problems. After much experimenting, she discovered how to achieve an effect of fuzz on the surface of a wax peach. The porous texture of an orange skin, difficult to reproduce in miniature, presented another problem which a little ingenuity soon solved. Both methods are secrets among the members of her family.

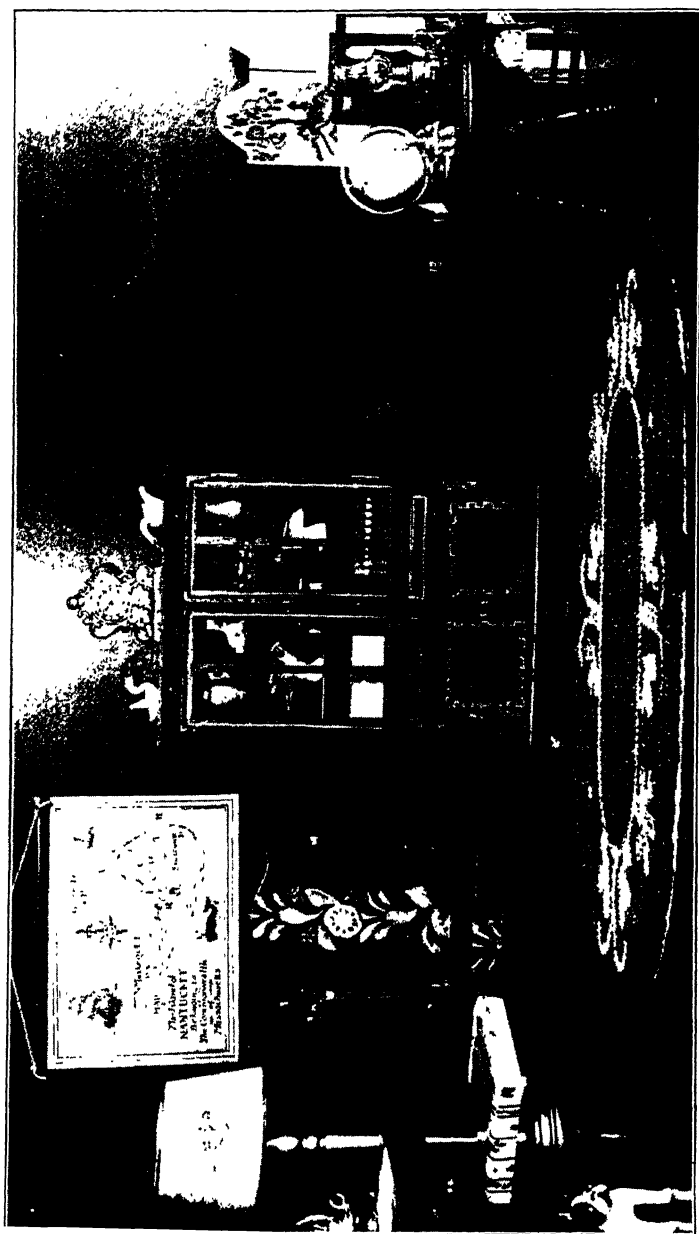
For new miniatures Mrs. Cook reproduces her own menus and also watches closely the colored magazine pictures in food advertisements. There is never any lack of ideas. "If there were only a few more hours in the day," she says, "I would have even more sample tables of food in my collection."

Mrs. Cook has gathered six scrapbooks of letters received from other hobbyists in the Lilliputian field, as well as newspaper and magazine articles dealing with miniatures.

What first attracted her to work with wax and make miniatures is her strong love for children. And it is this love which fosters her interest in her hobby. Through her exhibitions at department stores and fairs, she hopes that children all over the country will be attracted to working with wax, as she believes it is a clean and intriguing pastime, one which trains a child's mind through encouraging him to work with his hands.



*Miniature model of the U. S. Frigate Constitution, by A. G. Law. Ship model measures  $5\frac{1}{2}$ " inches in length at the waterline, 9 inches overall, and  $5\frac{3}{4}$ " inches from waterline to main truck. Glass case is 12 inches wide,  $7\frac{1}{4}$ " inches high, and  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " inches deep. Inside measurements of the drawer are  $11 \times 7\frac{1}{4} \times 2$  inches. Model is set in position on a water color, decorative map around the margins of which are inscribed the names of the ship's commanding officers along with her famous victories. From plans and research by F. Alexander Magoun, Department of Naval Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; The Bureau of Construction and Repair, U. S. Navy Department, Washington, D. C., and the Ford Collection of Maps, New York Public Library.*



*Pfahl miniatures.*

## Chapter V

### *Cabinet Collections*

To one unacquainted with miniatures, it is almost impossible to realize how many different avenues of interest are open to those who have made collecting miniatures their hobby. For modern miniatures especially, there are several general classifications which, in turn, have many divisions and subdivisions. Thus, there is the *oddity* class. This may include almost anything from freaks to whimsical miniatures not made according to a set scale. To a division of this oddity class belong many of the *microscopic* miniatures; strictly speaking, objects which cannot be fully viewed without a magnifying glass. The most important class is that of *scale models*; that is, replicas of full-size objects, on a scale, varying from one-quarter inch to three inches to the foot. The charm of these scale models lies in their artistic beauty and fine workmanship.

Since the possibilities for variation in a miniature collection are unlimited, a collector must always be on guard against the indiscriminate purchase of articles not related to his other possessions, if his goal is to acquire objects harmonious in scale and subject matter. So great is the lure to collect small objects that many collectors admit they must exercise discipline lest they clutter their cabinets with heterogeneous objects, unrelated miniatures forming a meaningless collection.

Helen Pfahl of Akron, Ohio, exemplifies the collector whose plan for a miniature collection has helped her avoid the pitfall of indiscriminate collecting. She first became interested in miniatures while gathering objects for a niece's doll house; they were on the three-quarter inch scale, crude, with no finish, merely furniture in form, made from buttons, beads, yarn, and fabrics, cheap little vases, lead dishes and accessories which can be found in any store.

For her niece's second doll house, Miss Pfahl collected mechanical articles of the one inch scale; the top of the baby grand piano could be opened and shut, and drawers, in dressers, secre-

taries and commodos could be worked. It was while looking for suitable furniture that she accidentally found several beautifully hand-made pieces which became the foundation of her own collection. At first she felt as if she were being extravagant, that this collecting was a non-essential luxury but she experienced as much pleasure in purchasing miniatures as when she acquired an "heirloom" piece of furniture for her home.

When she began to consider how her purchases were related to one another, she replaced the imperfect pieces, since they detracted from the general harmonious effect, and began to purchase accessories to trim her small desks, cabinets, secretaries and commodos.

At the present time, Miss Pfahl's collection consists of about 200 pieces of furniture, together with some 700 accessories. The furniture is made of various kinds of wood: pine, cherry, maple, walnut, mahogany and rosewood; many types of design are represented: Hepplewhite, Chippendale, Duncan Phyfe; Sheraton, Queen Anne, Empire, Victorian, Early American Dutch. Among the chairs are fifteen different styles; lacquer, Windsor, upholstered rockers from the Victorian era, ladder back with woven seats, a love seat, a milk stool. Eight of the tables are of different construction; the drop leaf, butterfly, extension, tilt-top, high console, drum, occasional and the old fashioned folding game table. The four pianos are a black lacquer and gold clavichord, a rosewood grand, a decorated Astor of the spinet type, and a mahogany harpsichord. The harpsichord is a reproduction of the instrument at Mount Vernon and, according to the information given at this Washington shrine, this was the first piece of furniture to find its way back to Mount Vernon when restoration began. Miss Pfahl has not as yet collected all the various types of clocks she is looking for. Although her collection now includes six grandfather, Terry (shelf clock), French mantle, banjo, wag-on-the-wall, and an alarm clock, she is still searching for a steeple and hour glass clock. The variety of mirrors, desk, chests, sideboards, cupboards, and dressers cover most of the periods already mentioned, running from highboys with fine brass hardware to a blanket chest with rope handles and even an old weather beaten leather ridge top trunk which she recently found in an antique shop. The beds include high and low poster, spool, Victorian, canopy, Dutch rope with feather bed, Colonial Tester rope with straw-tick and several kinds of cradles.

Each collector has his favorites and Miss Pfahl's are those miniatures copied from the furniture used by the Washington and Custis families. She has a model of Washington's four poster clocks. The variety of mirrors, desk, chests, sideboards, cupboards, bed, his mother's wing chair, the harpsichord given by Washington to Nellie Custis, Chippendale ribbon back chairs, a chest of drawers with fine brass handles and Nellie Custis's tambour frame. Among the other objects are an unusual Sheraton cupboard, an old step back walnut chest and an iron stove. Miss Pfahl also mentions with particular pride her miniature album into which small pictures of several generations of her family are mounted; the old silver lantern of the Paul Revere type which came from India; a hand painted revolving globe of the world; a set of chess; a beautiful brass chandelier bearing six milk glass globes and the pineapple, Southern architectural symbol of hospitality at the base, purchased by her father in an antique shop; an antique gold luster tea set from Magnolia, Massachusetts; and her rugs, hooked and woven, from the mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee.

As indicated previously, her method is that of a person furnishing a home with beautiful reproductions of the styles loved by our ancestors. Miss Pfahl says that she has driven for several hundred miles with her parents, who share her interest in the hobby, to visit one antique shop after another and to return home with only a stone ware pitcher, a candlestick or a little crockery jug. Then there are times when the trips have been singularly successful, such as the time when Miss Pfahl's father located the outstanding brass chandelier already described.

Her miniatures are a part of the furnishings of her home. She has four cabinets of the hutch or chest type with glass china closet or book case top, in harmony with companion furniture. A mahogany chest in the dining room in which some of her miniatures are displayed, has proved to be much more fascinating than if it were filled with crystal and china. There is a maple cabinet in her library and two other maple cabinets placed on top of chests of drawers in the upstairs living room. The miniatures are grouped in units; all library furniture and accessories together, all bedroom furniture together. She feels that the beauty lies in the miniatures and appropriate accessories, with no wallpaper, curtains or other scale backgrounds to detract the attention of the visitor. Miss Pfahl, to be sure, admires the rooms made by Mrs. James

Ward Thorne's workmen but to fit entire doll houses or architectural models into her home presents too many difficulties.

Only recently has Miss Pfahl's collection assumed its present prominence and, as a result, numerous friends in her community have become interested in miniatures. She has been asked to speak at girls' camps, hobby groups and clubs. For this purpose, she has constructed a portable display cabinet in which to exhibit several of her rooms of furniture. She also illustrates her talks with the Kodachrome slides her father has taken of many of her arrangements. She has never formally exhibited because of lack of time and also because her greatest pleasure comes from sharing her hobby with her friends in her own home. Two years ago, when she grouped her miniatures into units, eighty-five people came to see them within a week's time. Word of the collection had merely passed from one neighbor to another. Since then, hundreds of visitors have seen the Pfahl collection, each one fascinated by some different phase of the collection and asking whether he or she might return, bringing a friend. Those who

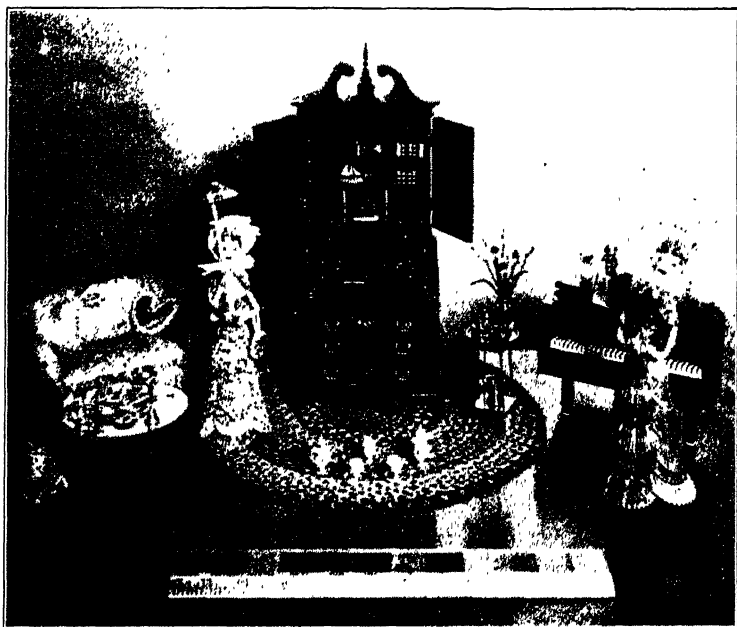


*Mahogany Lowboy.—Mrs. Ruth Young Taylor.*

have seen her displays many times, always find something new that had escaped their attention previously. Miss Pfahl says that her collection of miniatures has been a satisfying hobby. recreational, educational and truly social in its nature.

Mrs. Ruth Young Taylor of Saco, Maine, handles the display of her miniatures in a manner similar to Miss Pfahl's but her interests are not limited to scale models exclusively. Mrs. Taylor has always had a fondness for small objects and she feels her life has been made richer for the friendships which have developed as a result of mutual interests in miniatures. Through business friends in India, for example, she was introduced by letter to people in the United States with whom she now corresponds regularly and counts among her closest circle of associates.

During a search for a large grandmother clock to serve as a companion piece for a grandfather clock, Mrs. Taylor found herself, deserting the large and practical pieces for smaller clocks,



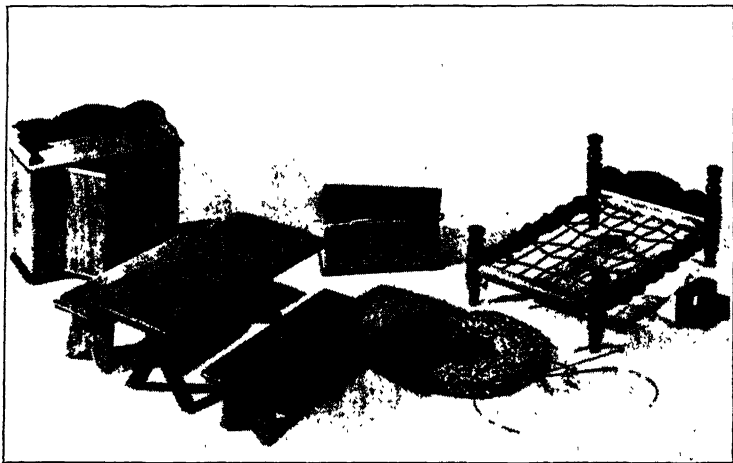
*Secretary.—Mrs. Ruth Young Taylor.*



dishes, bureaus and desks. When she discovered a grandmother's clock only three feet high, the desire for a larger one vanished. Even now, she still remembers her pleasure at finding her first small book. She continued to purchase doll's furniture, dolls to go with the pieces and accessories of various kinds. Later, she began looking for things that could not be seen plainly without the aid of a magnifier.

Mrs. Taylor relates that she became a collector without knowing it, for she purchased miniatures as a matter of decoration for each room, just as one would buy a picture appropriate for its surroundings. Of her furniture collection, one of her outstanding pieces is a Governor Winthrop desk, a highboy scaled three inches to the foot, and a secretary scaled one and one half inches to the foot. These pieces gave Mrs. Taylor an excellent opportunity to acquire equipment such as lamps that can be lit, gold pen and pencils one inch long, rulers and other desk and table items.

Each room in Mrs. Taylor's eight-room house has some manner of miniature decoration; in one room is an octagonal curio table with about one hundred articles in it; in her lower hall is an oblong curio table which houses her tiny books and games; the dining room has three shelves and one glass cabinet; the living



*Jacob Seigle miniatures.*

room has three small glass cabinets; her upstairs sitting room has several more cabinets. Like Miss Pfahl, Mrs. Taylor says it is much more interesting to live with miniatures everywhere than to keep them segregated.

Mr. Jacob Seigle of St. Louis, Missouri, became a miniature enthusiast two and a half years ago. He is a member of the American Museum of Natural History and through that institution purchased a collection of molded metal animals. Most museums of natural history throughout the country sell these miniatures, some of which have been designed by McClelland Barclay and Rockwell Kent. With that beginning, Mr. Seigle has now collected over a thousand items of ivory, silver, china, glass and wood. He does not specialize in any particular material or subject matter as long as the object is two inches or smaller. A few of his ivory carvings are a quarter of an inch or smaller. Like so many collectors, Mr. Seigle has purchased accessories and furniture from Mr. R. V. Fisher, and also from Mrs. Dorothy Tompkins of Cranford Miniatures, Pleasantville, New York. Although the Cranford furniture is somewhat larger than Mr. Seigle desires, he continues to buy pieces from that company, for he considers the workmanship remarkable. The fine miniature portraits from Cranford Miniatures are also among Mr. Seigle's collection. He prizes each piece but his favorite is a one inch scale banjo clock washed in dull yellow gold. The design is typically American and the full size original clock from which the miniature is copied was made by Aaron Willard whose uncle patented the design in 1802. The clock is decorated with transparent enamel inlay, around the face is red enamel inlay, on the upright panel are inlaid red roses and dark green leaves, together with red rosebuds to form an attractive design. On the bottom of the clock is a picture of a ship at sea made from butterfly wings; South American butterfly wings of iridescent blue-green were used to represent the ocean; the sailing ship is hand-painted. Mr. Seigle has never exhibited but his miniatures are on permanent display in his home.

Miss Ellen Ballon's collection is the direct result of a serious accident which occurred in London in 1938. While returning from a concert, the Canadian pianist fractured her ankle stepping from a taxicab and was hospitalized for several months. One of her friends purchased a small glass animal and arranged to have it placed on her breakfast tray, thinking the ludicrous little figure

would cheer up the convalescent. From the moment she saw the glass animal, Miss Ballon knew that miniature hunting would occupy a great deal of her time when she was released from the hospital. For several weeks afterward her small zoo grew quickly when other friends discovered her interest in the hobby. When she was released from the hospital, she had ten pieces. Now she has one hundred and nine animals, including twenty-four penguins, eleven elephants and thirty-seven birds of different types in addition to an assortment of dogs, cats, deer, horses, cattle, giraffes, rabbits, fish, turtles, walruses, and kangaroos. Several dozen china animals are kept in a separate collection. Among her small wood furniture is an early American break-front desk made by the late Edwin R. King of New Bedford, Massachusetts, a working model, containing pigeon holes, sixteen drawers with brass handles, two draw-out shelves for candlesticks, shelves for books and three secret drawers. To fill the shelves she has thirteen leather bound books, the gift of Ralph Gustafson, one of Canada's leading poets and first edition collector. Her desk set includes a large blotter, inkstand of glass with leather lid, a paper knife, a leather cigarette box, ashtray, roly blotter and a leather photograph frame. The dining room set is mahogany with six chairs, harp-motif back and seats upholstered in black and gold Regency stripes. There are also a mahogany sideboard with shelves, a pair of corner shelves in mahogany, an oval mahogany side table, library steps topped with green leather and a brown leather waste paper basket with gold tooling.

Among her china objects are an eight piece Empire china tea set on a china tray, two Chinese vases, six Crown Derby cups, saucers and plates and one Crown Derby teapot with sugar basin, cream jug, sandwich plate and tea caddy to match, and one Dresden China musician set: three violinists, holding violins and removable bows, and three music stands; two ladies and three gentlemen, grouped about settees.

Through her collection, she has been brought into contact with collectors on several continents. Miss Ballon has received letters from the United States, England, South America and Australia asking for more complete information on some of the items in her collection.

No matter how busy she is, Miss Ballon finds a few minutes during her American tours to wander through a few antique shops searching for additional miniatures. In fact, during her

last trip through St. Louis, her manager feared she was lost. She had slipped away unnoticed in pursuit of more small scale objects and became so absorbed with her findings she barely returned to the concert hall in time to dress and make her appearance on schedule.

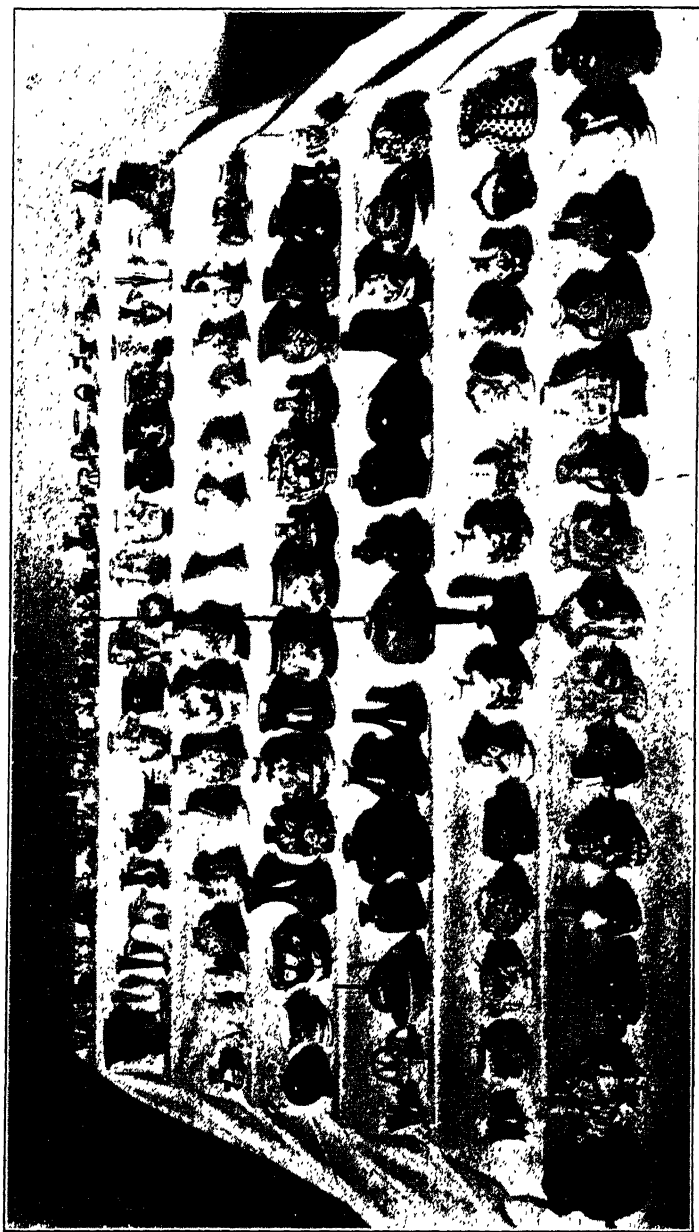
### *Vases and Pitchers*

The present World War affects pitcher and vase collecting because imports and exports have ceased. Just as the Chinese were about to produce a number of cinnabar and cloisonné pitchers, the shipment of brass and copper from the United States was barred. Thus, only a limited number of these pieces have ever been received in this country.

Of the hundreds of pitcher collections in the United States, the best known is that owned by Mrs. Lon S. Cooper of Piqua, Ohio. Numbering over eight hundred and each a different design and shape, Mrs. Cooper's pitchers are all miniatures. Her major interest is in modern pitchers, the smallest being one of American make one-eighth inch high and about the diameter of a match stick. Although American pitchers predominate, the collection also includes many French, Italian, English, Swiss and Mexican pieces. Nearly every country in the world is represented by at least one item.

Mrs. Cooper's first pitcher was purchased for her by her husband in Toronto several years ago. With that one object as a start, she began looking for more small pitchers wherever she and her husband traveled.

Her fine collection of colored Venetian glass pitchers is placed on a window ledge behind a Venetian blind so that when the sun shines through the window the beauty of the colored glass may be fully appreciated. One of her most interesting groups consists of a number of small French pitchers placed on a white whatnot in a room papered with dark red wallpaper. In her breakfast room, she has arranged pitchers made in the form of birds, fish and animals, each having a handle, and spout and despite their size can easily be used to pour. In the kitchen is another shelf filled with Belgian and Chinese metal pitchers. On the corner shelves above the sink and dishwasher are more sturdy pitchers in which cactus and ivy vines have been planted.



*Miniature vase collection of Mrs. Claude S. Hyman.*

Mrs. Cooper has marked each of her purchases and has an elaborate card index system which tells when and where each object was purchased and gives other interesting data which might be forgotten. One of her South American varieties comes from Ecuador and is made from the nut of the ivory tree, colored with native dyes. This foreign pitcher comes in four different styles and averages one and one-quarter inches in height. A metal pitcher, of the same height, is made of antique finish copper, hand hammered. One of the cloisonné miniatures is one and three-quarters inches high and is made in only one style. Each of these cloisonné pitchers is decorated with Lotus flowers in several colors and lined with blue porcelain.

The Great Smoky Mountain Industries in Knoxville, Tennessee, has what are termed the smallest pitchers in the world, measuring three-sixteenths, one-quarter and one-half inches high. This same company also has Cherokee pottery pitchers in sizes from two to four inches in height.

Miss Dorothy Howell of Detroit, who has exhibited at two hobby shows, regards her collection of pitchers as a modest one despite the fact that she already has one hundred and seventy-five fine specimens in the miniature class. No catalog of her possessions is available at present.

Mr. B. N. Melson who operates a Hobby Shop in Felton, California, has designed five pitchers and five vases which he has had made from California redwood burl. Each object averages two inches high.

Fewer collectors have made groupings of vases only, to the exclusion of pitchers. Such a collection is owned by Mrs. Claude Hyman, of Chicago, who owns four hundred and fifty vases. She started this collection after completing a dolls' house. She had received so much pleasure from gathering objects suitable for display in the house that when it was completed she wanted to start another hobby. One of the small vases in the dolls' house had always fascinated her and it occurred to her that miniature vases would make an interesting hobby. At first, she considered concentrating on one group, such as Staffordshire, Bristol or early American, but finally decided that representative pieces of different potteries and potters would make a more representative grouping. Some of her unusual styles include a vase made from an American bullet and purchased from a French antique dealer

who bought it in France; among her rarest vases are a French Lille of soft paste porcelain, signed by the artist and dated 1767 and a vase with a tea dust glaze from the Chien Lung period, 1736-1796.

Miss Bertha Chapman of Springfield, Illinois, has a collection of vases from twenty countries ranging in size from one-half inch to five or six inches tall. She counts as her treasures a pottery vase from Finland, an etched ruby glass from Bohemia, and a carved walrus ivory vase.

To Mrs. Paul B. Lentz of Detroit, a vase measuring five inches or less constitutes a miniature. In all, her collection numbers four hundred and sixty vases; some are English bone china, brass, cinnabar, or in the oddity class. Among the latter group is a vase covered with rattlesnake skin and one made by convicts on Kodiak Island, Alaska.

One of Mrs. Florence Cranston's largest collections is an assortment of pitchers, many of them from the Orient. As a result of her collecting, Mrs. Cranston has acquainted herself with the methods of manufacturing her rare jade, cloisonné, satsuma ware, cinnabar, copper, bronze and pewter pitchers. The miniature work of the Chinese shows to what a patient race they belong. For example, months are spent in cutting a large jade block and roughly shaping the stone before the carving ever begins. Tools are exceedingly crude and cutting is made possible only because of the abrasives used.

Mrs. Cranston found that cloisonné is made by soldering to the metal foundation of the small pitcher a narrow band of copper, silver or gold which divides the delicate and intricate pattern into as many cells or cloisons as there are colors to be filled with moistened enamels. Then comes the charcoal firing process; the intensity of the fires is controlled by fanning. When all the cells are filled, the vase or pitcher is polished slowly and patiently with pumice stone and cleaned with charcoal; the free edge of the outlining metal is then gilded, as well as the metal at the opening and the base of the vase.

Cinnabar is the finest grade red lacquer, made by grinding mercury sulphide into fine powder and then mixing it with sap of the lac-tree. The preparation is applied to the small article in a heated liquid state and while it is still warm the tracing and carving is done with sharp pointed knives.

One pitcher in the Cranston collection is a copy of an unusual Egyptian water vessel of copper pewter. It has a silver background, pewter with overlay set in semi-precious stones and splashed copper on hand hammered pewter. China was the first country to use the alloy of tin and lead, known as pewter, and within recent years has produced thousands of small pewter articles.

Copper-pewter, however, did not originate in China but was copied from Persia and Egypt. It is hand wrought from pure copper, glazed with pewter and hand polished. The hand polish gives the article a soft lustre, peculiar to pewter, as well as the rich warm glow of the copper. This, coupled with the exquisite hand chasing and engraving executed by painstaking Chinese makes the articles much in demand, and before the second World War, revived the production of this ware in China.

#### *From Shoes to Dolls.*

Within the past year, Constance E. Schloemer of West Bend, Wisconsin, has collected miniature shoes only. Although the number of pieces acquired is not large, she already has pairs of Italian mountain climbing shoes, Italian ski shoes, Norwegian boots, Mexican shoes, Indian beaded moccasins of several varieties, Slavic boots, various types of wooden shoes and American cowboy boots.

Two-thirds of Mrs. Mildred Hanna's collection of five hundred shoes are miniatures. For three years this Detroit collector has purchased miniature shoes from many points in the United States and more than a half dozen foreign countries, the size of her collection increasing rapidly as she has included porcelain, Dresden, glass and metal molded in the form of slippers and boots, in addition to those made of leather. One-quarter inch is the length of the smallest boot, made in sterling silver; one-half inch is the measurement of a pair of brass slippers. Among the "one-of-a-kind" objects in her collection is a boot made by a miner from a piece of anthracite coal and a pair of roller skates less than one half inch in length.

Matthew C. Brush is only one of the hundreds of collectors in the United States who selected elephants as his hobby. His collection numbers more than fifteen hundred, made from many types of materials, including ivory, jade, wood and rubber. Representations of both wild and domestic animals, are favorites with hobbyists.



Mrs. L. A. Shelton, Oklahoma City, has nearly nine hundred and fifty animals; three hundred dogs, eighty-four cats, and more than five hundred wild animals including bears, monkeys, tigers, reindeers and alligators. During her few years of collecting, she has gathered nine hundred china miniatures including a complete wedding party, dolls of foreign nationalities and dancing girls. Another separate group among this collector's miniatures are three hundred and five sets of small salts and peppers made in unusual shapes such as vegetables, fruits and birds with several of them carved from acorns and cow horn. To a charm string she has now added three hundred and fifty miniature objects. As a result of exhibiting her collections at the local YWCA Hobbies Show, Mrs. Shelton has won nine ribbons, awarded to her for groups such as the salts and peppers, the charm string, the dogs and her eleven hobby scrap books.

Mrs. H. B. Jensen of Detroit, Michigan claims to own the largest assortment of miniature cats in the world; there are 530 in all, ranging from one-quarter inch to eighteen inches. Of this number, 450 are less than four inches tall; 200 are one inch or less. Five years ago, Mrs. Jensen had collected only six figures of cats and did not actively become interested in this hobby until 1939.

Since 1935, Mrs. Gerald Witham has collected horse statuettes and miniatures, ranging in size from one-quarter inch to one foot, of all colors and materials. Some carry riders, some have only saddles and bridles and others are devoid of all trappings. Most of the objects in this collection of two hundred animals were gifts by friends who had purchased them in different states in this country and European nations.

Mr. F. H. Betton of Bloomington, Indiana, collects bulls and steers carved from wood and ivory and has exhibited them in hobby shows, one of the last displays being held by the Union Hobby Show in Alumni Hall, March, 1942.

As a play on his name, H. O. Fox, Long Beach, California, started twenty years ago to collect foxes, miniatures and larger sizes. His first acquisition dates from the St. Louis Exposition of 1904. Many of his foxes come from foreign countries, from Sweden, England, Germany, France, Spain, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Ireland, Holland, Japan, China and India. His most interesting foxes are a nut cracker of wood from Russia, a cigar

lighter from Japan, hand carved wooden foxes from Switzerland, Luxembourg porcelain foxes, Royal Doulton from England and an antique pin cushion of sterling silver, modeled like a fox, also from England. One of the novelties is a red fox of felt, handmade, fitted with a music box which plays, "Nyah, Nyah, said the little Red Fox." When Mr. Fox exhibited his collection at the Long Beach, California, Hobby Show in 1941, he also showed his jewelry collection which features foxes as decoration.

One of Mrs. Daniel H. Grady's (Portage, Wisconsin) hobbies is collecting hats, all miniature. Two hundred pieces of headgear are made of wood, several kinds of glass, clay and china a century ago. Among them is a man's high hat, only three inches high, once worth \$4,000. On it is inscribed: "Made of national greenbacks, reduced and macerated at the United States Treasury. Estimated value of bills, \$4,000."

During 1942, in California cities, a collection of over seventy models of miniature hats were exhibited by their owner, Lela O'Melveny of Pomona, who has spent the last twenty-five years in research to depict accurately styles beginning with the Egyptian, Roman and Grecian. The oldest bonnet in this remarkable collection is Phrygian, dated 2,500 B.C., and is laced together with rawhide. The most modern is a black satin cartwheel with a lace veil copied from a style featured by an American fashion magazine. Some of the style sources were vase paintings, pottery statuettes in art museums, tapestries, stained glass windows, paintings by old masters, ancient and medieval histories, the Bible, old volumes on costumes, and fashion periodicals.

The trademark of Josephi, New York hat designer, is his miniature hats. When he was starting his profession, he worked in a department store in Pittsburgh. There he amused himself by making miniature hats from scraps of material. Now when he presents his collections of wearable hats, he either decorates them with miniature hats or has earrings made in the form of hats copied from regular size models.

Within the last two years, Knox the Hatter, Fifth avenue, New York, has suggested, as gifts for men, a merchandise certificate enclosed in a small handbox containing a miniature hat.

Few collectors have specialized in miniature dolls. Only two are known to the present writer: Mrs. W. A. Waples of Louisville,



*Martha Marie. 5" all bisque, high yellow shoes, trimmed in black. Brown glass eyes. Waples collection.*



*Red Riding Hood, Pinocchio, Sunbonnet Sue, O'Neill Kewpie, Jack and Jill. Waples collection.*

Kentucky and Beatrice Cincar of Cleveland, Ohio. Miss Cincar collects and makes miniature dolls. Among the smallest is a complete wedding party; bride, groom and bridesmaids measuring one inch; a flower girl leading the party is only three-eighths of an inch high.

Mrs. Waples' collection is extensive, one hundred dolls measure from one to three inches, made of bisque, parian, china, Dresden and wood. Her most unusual doll is two and three-quarters inches tall, the smallest china head doll with a cloth body that she has ever seen. Among the oddities in this collection are a doll made of tobacco, one of beads, and another a memento from the New Orleans Carnival season, tagged: "This doll came from a King Cake which is cut twelve nights after Christmas, January 6. This opens the Carnival Season." The remainder of the Waples' dolls are outside the miniature class, ranging from three to ten inches, many averaging six inches tall.

### *Miscellaneous Collections*

In addition to his fine collection of sterling silver, R. V. Fisher also owns many other types of miniatures, framed oil and water color paintings, carved ivory, books, glass and pottery; each object for sale to collectors is duplicated in his collection. The size of the paintings varies from one and one-quarter by one and one-half inches to the size of a three cent stamp. The artists employed by this dealer also paint in oils, stamp sized portraits, copied from photographs. Among the smaller carved objects are elephants fashioned from ivory, coral, jade, amber, rosewood, coffee, wood, rock crystal, teakwood, olive wood, kashmir wood, coconut wood, rose quartz, tamarind wood and so on. The size of the elephants vary from one half inch to three inches high.

Among the few hand blown glass objects, made in the United States, is a two piece clear glass Silex coffee maker, one and one half inches high in the Fisher collection. The pottery miniatures include a group of hand painted glazed pottery pitchers, a tea set and a chocolate set.

His miniature pipes are similar to Mr. Gray's although not as extensive. The range of appeal among his miniatures is wide, from fine reproductions to inexpensive oddities. He has employed artists in this country to add new miniatures to the list and purchased the work of more than twenty miniature artists in India.



*Small china heads in ball gowns.  
Waples collection.*



*6" Dresden named "Helen."  
Waples collection.*

Many of his clients live outside the United States, several of them in Australia. Since the outbreak of the war, Mr. Fisher cannot import foreign objects nor can his Australian clients send money out of their country, but he still hears from them occasionally. In a letter received from Miss Vera Dowling, Mimosa Park, Milton, New South Wales, Australia, written when invasion of Australia seemed imminent, she says: "Isn't it great to have a hobby? In these times it takes one's mind off war news. We all have something to put up with but my motto is 'smile on.' We are working four days a week rolling bandages in case of invasion. My home is to have thirty beds in it for children if necessary. Now I am taking care of three evacuee children and seven others in my home on Lake Bernice on the South Coast. I'm thinking of packing all my miniatures away in case we have to leave. We are all going to the pictures tonight. As petrol is so scarce, we are not able to go when on the farm—too many miles."



*R. V. Fisher's carved miniatures with match  
in foreground for size.*

# FARMERS DEPOSIT NATIONAL BANK



THE RELIANCE LIFE 'Woolley, Hunter



Miss Dowling, unaware that sending stamps out of Australia was forbidden, tried to mail Mr. Fisher some postage stamps to pay for miniatures. Her letter was returned by the censor marked as follows:

"By Customs Proclamation No. 531 as published in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No. 166, dated 20th August, 1941, the exportation from Australia of the goods listed hereunder is prohibited unless the consent, in writing, of the Minister has first been obtained:

Antiques

Fur skins, dressed and goods manufactured from fur skins

Jewelry

Pearls

Platinum

Postage Stamps

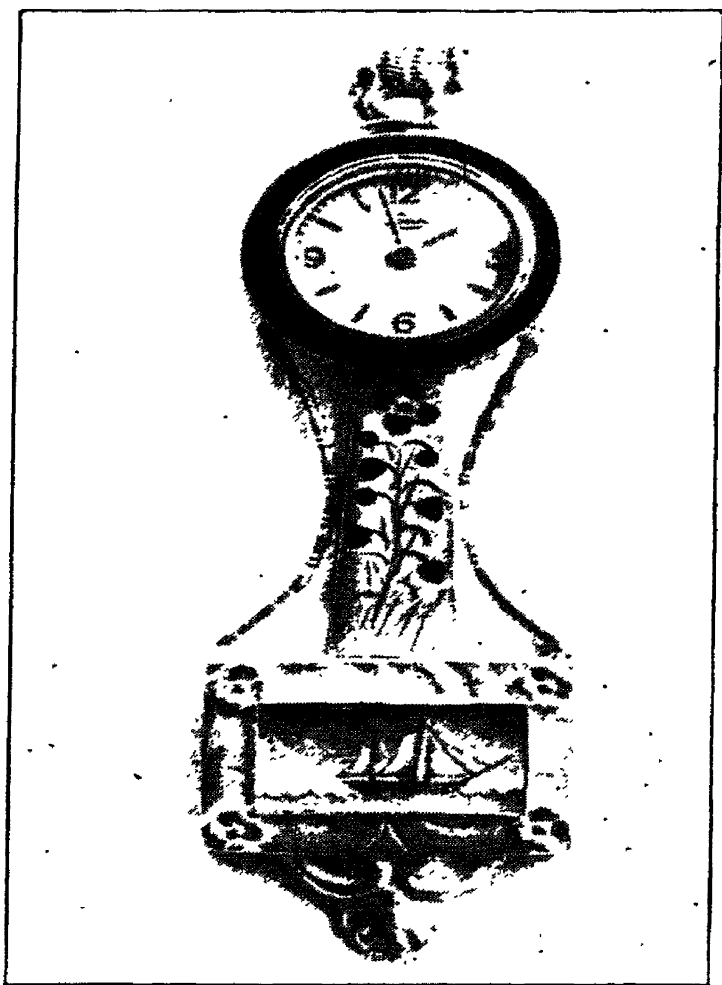
Precious and semi-precious stones

Watches with cases of precious metals."

Mr. Fisher received the marked envelope from Miss Dowling with another letter which said: "You will see by this envelope that my letter to you with stamps enclosed was returned, censored. We will try and keep in touch with letters till this war is over."

A young person who has joined the ranks of miniature collectors is the daughter of Mrs. Howard Kirkpatrick, Corpus Christi, Texas, Jean Kirkpatrick. Her collection began with a brown jug, made of two shades of pottery. The jug belonged to an English maid, employed in the Kirkpatrick household who had brought it with her from England. As a reward for good behavior, the child was allowed to play with the button box in which this jug was kept. She liked the jug so well that Emma, the maid, gave it to her. At first, anything small was added to the few pieces but as Miss Kirkpatrick grew older she became more discriminating and selected her pieces more carefully. Money she saved when she accompanied her parents on their travels was spent on miniatures. Many of the friends of the family who knew of her hobby offered to purchase articles for her while they were in Europe or in the Orient. Consequently, for so young a collector, Miss Kirkpatrick's possessions are surprisingly cosmopolitan. On frequent trips across the border to Mexico, it has been possible to pick up some small object not already duplicated in her collection. Chinatown, in both New York and





*Banjo clock, 2¾" size, sterling silver, washed in gold, with inlaid red and green enamel flowers. Copy of Aaron Willard type of 1802. Hand painted ship, with the blue wing of South American butterfly, as the ocean background, for ship. In collection of R. V. Fisher.*

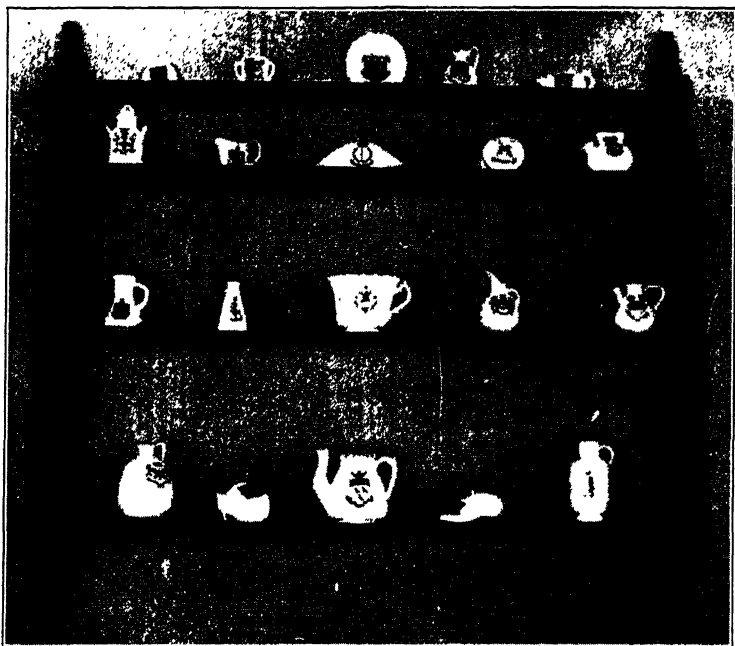
San Francisco, have yielded small treasures; the Chinese section at Marshall Field and Company in Chicago has also been a good hunting ground. While visiting in Chicago with her mother, Miss Kirkpatrick found two miniature silver boxes there. At Isleta, near Albuquerque, New Mexico, her mother, found an Indian ceremonial piece, an oddly shaped animal with a bit of turquoise tied on its back. On Olivera street in Los Angeles, on a tray marked "Your choice, 25 cents," they found a pair of miniature opera glasses.

Almost every important European country is represented in Miss Kirkpatrick's collection; tea sets with English hall marks, a replica of the Iron Virgin of Nuremberg, small jointed dolls from the hill towns of Italy, a carved wooden bird's nest from Finland, a book showing scenes of Inverness, Scotland and many others. Up to the present, she has no small objects from either Russia or any of the Balkan countries. Africa and South America are also represented; a sarcophagus with a mummy inside it from Egypt; and a Columbian house of balsa wood.

Before her daughter was born, Mrs. Kirkpatrick and her husband traveled throughout Europe and purchased several of the things now in the collection; a pen knife from the Henkle factory in Cologne, cups and pitchers from Pompeii and Venetian glass in Venice. Neither was a collector at the time but the small objects were saved and later when their daughter showed an interest in the hobby the articles were used as a nucleus for her present collection. She has gold coins, some of the smallest postage stamps, copies of several of Van Gogh's flower pictures, a carved ivory chess table and men, an ivory sewing table, piano and chair, Dresden, Limoges, Staffordshire, and Majolica china and large collections of dogs, both in wood and ivory, and elephants of wood, ivory and china.

Mrs. J. A. Jerger of Chicago also collected souvenirs from the various European and Asiatic countries she visited; two small cups and saucers, one from London the other from Paris, temples from China, a Japanese bamboo house, miniature dolls from England, Scotland, Wales, Mexico and Korea, a reproduction of Shakespeare's home and Ann Hathaway's cottage, a one inch high Eiffel Tower from Paris, and a rosary from Guadeloupe. She has not purposely specialized in miniatures but preferred to bring back souvenirs, typical of the country or city she visited, which were small and easy to pack.

While at Baden-Baden, Mrs. Charles Younggreen of Chicago, purchased a one inch ivory carving of a horse. It was her first miniature purchase and laid the foundation for future interest in the field. The miniature violin in her collection was the gift of Mary Pickford. Several other gifts among her miniatures are a fairy under glass from Mrs. Thorne, a small photograph of Colleen Moore as the star of "Flaming Youth," the gift of Miss Moore and the Lord's Prayer engraved on a type slug, presented by the Addressograph Company. There is a predominance of Oriental miniatures in Mrs. Younggreen's collection; clay figures of street vendors and fishermen purchased in San Francisco's Chinatown, a porcelain tea set, several hundred porcelain animals, a Chinese iron pot and many jade and carnelian cats and birds. Mrs. Younggreen's most precious objects are a sterling silver cup, saucer and spoon made for her by Guglielmo Cini.



*Miniature English porcelains from the collection of Natalie Green.*

## *Military Miniatures*

The tin soldier, as we know it today, made its appearance in the eighteenth century; the origin of military toys, however, goes back to antiquity. Boys of ancient Rome had their legions, their chariots and gladiators with which to play circus and war. During the middle ages and at the beginning of modern times there were tin toys of a military nature, but they were few and costly. The Nuremberg tinsmith who is credited with introducing tin toys to the world market in 1760 was Andreas Hilpert. The popularity of these Nuremberg soldiers was due largely to the fact that a definite scale was established. An adult man was always of uniform size, never larger than thirty-three millimetres, or one and one quarter inches and all other figures were made in proportion, making it possible to add pieces over a period of time and gradually build up an entire army without acquiring an ill assortment of giants and dwarfs. This Nuremberg scale is still followed today.

Many of these old military toys were not always in good taste. For instance in the early 1790's miniature guillotines patterned after the famous "widow" of the French Revolution were sold as toys for children. In December of 1793, Goethe wrote to his mother asking her to purchase one of these small guillotines for his son, August, but she refused, saying, "Under no condition will I buy such an infamous murder machine." Not all women voiced such objections and the guillotines was purchased for many European boys.

Although Sir Neville Wilkinson believed that his Nuremberg cannon was made as a traveler's sample, an English writer, Charles Beard states that this theory does not apply as far as the manufacture of such samples in England is concerned. English armorers were expressly forbidden to advertise their wares in any way or to canvas patronage, without being fined. He believes that sample pieces may have been made but strictly speaking, they were not miniatures. Designs for decoration were submitted to the armorer's patron in a drawing about one quarter actual size. Mr. Beard's examination of the records of the Armourer's Company of London suggests other purposes to which these miniature armors may have been put. These small pieces may have been made as fines extracted from delinquent members of the Armourer's Guild. According to an inventory of 1585, an armor in the guild hall was not a gift but exacted by the court of the

company in satisfaction of some misdemeanor. Previous to the Reformation, military miniatures were mounted on a wooden dummy, appropriately colored and used occasionally as decoration in chapels and buildings. These elaborate pieces were intended as instructive toys. Just as miniature railroads, small bridges or building construction sets are bought today for educational purposes, military miniatures were used in the past for the guidance of youths destined in manhood to warlike pursuits. Early in the seventeenth century, the Armoury at St. James' Palace had a complete exhibition of every aspect of military life of that time. During those years, jousting toys, guided by the hands of the players, were popular. A wood cut made by Hans Burgkmair, circa 1515, shows Emperor Maximilian as a child, playing with some jousting toys. In his boyhood, Louis XIII was taught to maneuver his army of metal toys and later put this knowledge into use commanding flesh and blood troops.

In the eighteenth century, flat soldiers were chiefly used. Not until several years later were the figures made in a rounded form which France was the first country to introduce. The few early specimens now extant are blackened with age; an alloy to insure continued brightness was not developed until later when lead armies were constructed. Early in the nineteenth century, some soldiers were mounted on a rounded leaden base. These figures were known as the "invincible army" since they could be knocked down but righted themselves.

Modern military powers still use miniatures to portray methods of attack developed by army and navy strategists. Curt Reiss, a reporter in pre-war Europe, reports that about 1936, the Auer Works abandoned its factory at Oranienburg, a town not far from Berlin, which is famous for its concentration camp. This factory was only one of many that were owned and operated by the Auer concern. Still, it seemed strange to the inhabitants of the town that the factory should be closed down so suddenly. But there was something even stranger about the affair. Not only was the factory shut down, but it was left practically intact. The 2,000 workers and the office personnel moved out. But the machinery, the boiler room, the laboratories were left untouched. A short while later, some fifty relatively young men moved into this ghost factory. The third floor was made into living quarters and the offices became classrooms where those fifty young men began to attend lectures. At about the same time, strange toys began to arrive and they were set up in the courtyard. There

were miniature bridges, miniature railway tracks, switches, junctions, power stations and so on. The entrances to the factory were locked and closely guarded. No one without a special permit was allowed to enter. No one was allowed to leave. But it was not a concentration camp or prison, it was a school for saboteurs, created by the Nazi Military Intelligence, to train men, through demonstrations with miniatures, how to cope with problems of sabotage on a larger scale.

Other schools for saboteurs were set up in different parts of Germany, for instance in the cities of Hanover, in Halverstadt, in the cities of Brunswick, and in Buckow, near Berlin. Oranienburg, however, was the biggest and the most important.

Since the United States has never been a military nation, military toys have never been produced in large quantities. Of the few collections in this country, one of them is owned by Mrs. Virginia Becic of Chicago. There are more than eleven hundred figures, divided into small groups since it is impossible to show the entire collection in her apartment. Each group is exhibited in its turn; for several months there may be a Jeep surrounded by American military figures, then a display of naval figures or miniatures representing branches of United Nations armed forces. Appropriate backgrounds accompany many of these groups. For instance, Mrs. Becic has a camouflaged radio station, messengers, aeroplanes, tanks, guns, cannon, mess tents with equipment, and carrier pigeons.

Modern military miniatures are in the minority in this outstanding collection. Some of her earliest figures represent the 74th Foot Regiment of 1778, the Royal Highland and Emigrants, 1781, Corps of Light Infantry, 1791, Artillerists, 1802, the Royal Marines, 1814 and Corps of Marines, 1817.

Mrs. Becic's only regret is that she did not begin her collection earlier, when a greater number of small figures were available. She first began collecting figures as a result of another hobby, miniature horses. While still busy with this hobby, she saw a miniature horse mounted by a General. This General was the beginning of her collection of figures. One of her favorite groups is not military; Henry VIII and his six wives. She likes this group because she spent so much time in making him just as she wanted him to appear, royal robes trimmed in ermine, a jeweled garter and a precious stone on his bosom. Jewels were

Becic has never had training as a jeweler, she succeeded in setting these stones.

Before this collector began to acquire miniature historical figures, she was not interested in history. When she began her collection, she neglected to investigate the background of many of the important personages of the past represented in miniature. But when she purchased the group of seven figures including Henry VIII and his wives, her curiosity was aroused and she studied intensively the lives of each of the women and the king. She checked each figure to make certain of the color of their eyes, their hair, how they dressed and their favorite jewels. For months, Mrs. Becic worked on these figures alone but she feels well repaid for this effort.

Many of her soldier figures are hand painted and all the details have been checked with military guides. Among her Royal Greek Guards are soldiers before and after 1919. Those figures representing the guards before that year had to be painted with red jackets; after that year the jackets were blue.

Until the United States entered the war, Mrs. Becic had reproduced miniature historical and military figures, packing each figure in boxes on the cover of which was printed a short history of the figure within. With metals difficult to obtain, Mrs. Becic's Miniature Toy Company has been disbanded until materials are more easily obtainable.

Within the past two years, a Russian sculptor, Mikhail Z. Gerashshenevsky, has been making historical miniature figures. Included with his group of American Continental, British and Greek soldiers are figures of John Paul Jones, Lafayette, Washington, Franklin, Simon Bolivar, Nathan Hale, Lincoln, Pulaski, Winston Churchill, and Florence Nightingale. He first molds his figures in wax, then makes a pattern from which lead figures are cast; each figure is then hand painted. Because of the minute detail involved, the sculptor uses surgical implements, mainly those used in brain operations. It is his desire to reproduce figures famous in American and European history, issuing American figures in proportion of two to one. It has also been planned to create contemporary or international figures in a different series. The name of this company is Historical Miniatures, Incorporated, formed by Mr. Gera and Montgomery Evans. Mr. Evans' fine

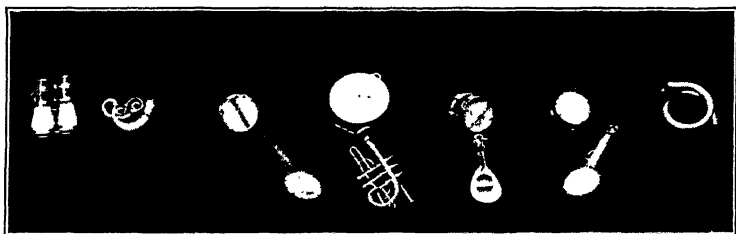
personal collection of military miniatures is now in storage since his enlistment in the United States Army.

Among the objects now stored are figures produced by a craftsman in the Burlington Arcade in London who has fashioned all the original Knights of the Garter with the coats of arms of each Knight faithfully reproduced. From Nuremberg, Mr. Evans has a complete arrangement of the Spanish invasion of Peru. Two of his most interesting individual items are unpainted Napoleonic soldiers purchased in St. Malo. Bought in 1810 for a boy who died before he was able to play with them, the toys had been kept in the family for a hundred years. His finest figure is of Rurik, in silver and gold, and was used as a seal by Nicholas II. On the bottom is the Russian Imperial Crown.

When he lived in Paris, he acquired a number of excellent French historical figures in a shop on the Rue des Saints Péres, using them for decoration on mantles and the tops of bookshelves. This collection was given to Man Ray, the photographer, but it was later replaced. His last French collection, including an elaborate display of the Maginot Line, is now two hundred miles northwest of Ireland, miles deep in the Atlantic Ocean. Mr. Evans was returning to the United States on the Athenia when the boat was torpedoed.

#### *Musical Instruments and Theatres.*

Little information is available on musical miniatures of the past. One of the earliest references is made in an English sale catalog of 1756 advertising "musical figures representing monkeys in different attitudes or monkeys playing on music." The collecting of this type of miniature is a new field.



*Miniature musical instrument watch charms, Constance Furbush collection.*





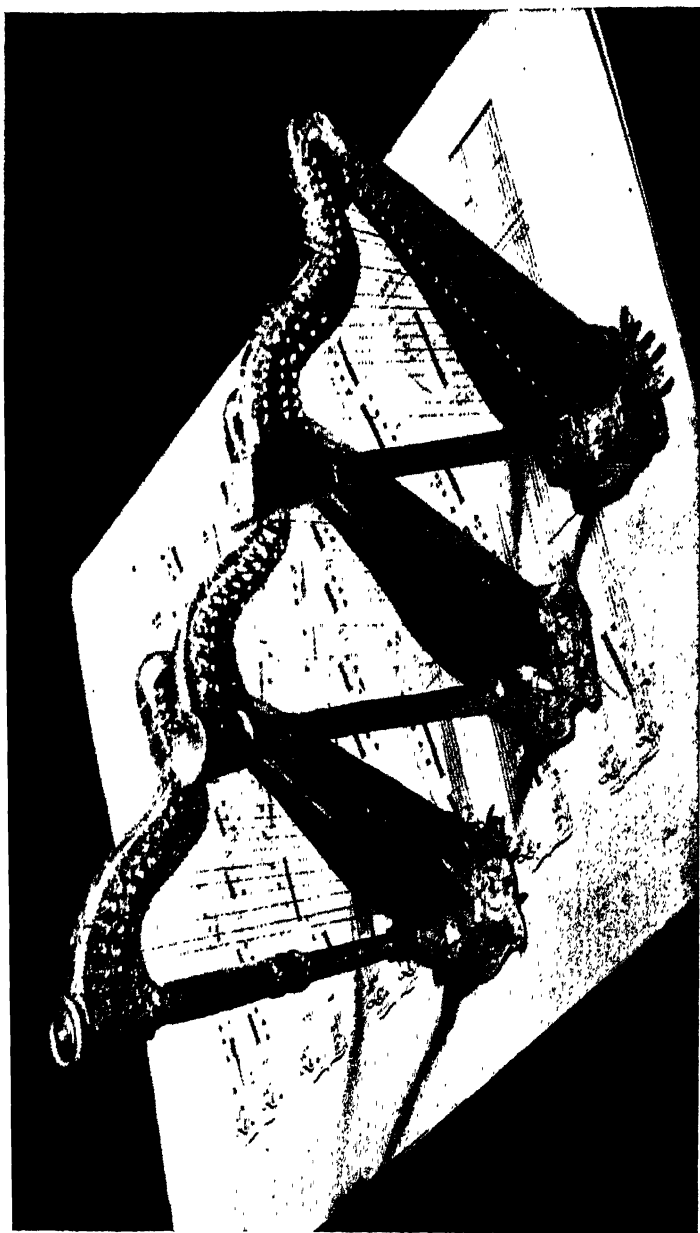
*Mrs. Otto Ressler and part of her collection of musical miniatures.*

Perhaps the most famous miniature musical instrument of the present day is the pipe organ in the Colleen Moore Doll's House. Orchestra leaders, Horace Heidt and Fred Waring, have small collections of musical instruments. Gene Krupa owns a miniature orchestra made from pipe cleaners; Helen Jepson collects china figurines in singing positions and Emily Adams, violinist with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra collects small violins. Many collectors possess at least one musical instrument and in nearly all cases it is a violin. Mrs. Thorne has several in her model drawing rooms; Jack Norworth and J. H. Gray both have a violin, case and bow. The Polish Roman Catholic Museum of Chicago has on temporary exhibition a solid gold violin, measuring three inches.

Another rare stringed miniature, also in Chicago, is that made by Frederick Gosparlin, a violin maker by profession. During his spare time, Mr. Gosparlin devoted 300 hours to making this small violin from some bits of wood taken from a genuine Stradivarius violin which he owns. Everything is reproduced, the ivory button at the base, the breech with holes and brass keys. This is the only small violin he has made, and he does not intend to make another or sell the present one.

For several years, Miss Rosalind Stiritz of Alton, Illinois, has been collecting musical instruments but her collection is not large. She has eight orchestras and ten pianos, three of which are music boxes. Her interest in this hobby was aroused about three years ago when she was presented with the busts of three composers, Chopin, Handel and Wagner. She began looking for busts of other composers and during her search she purchased orchestras and pianos.

Mrs. Otto Resler, an instructor in the College of Fine Arts at Oklahoma City University, a pianist and a piano teacher, collects pianos in preference to other musical instruments. Her first piano was a gift from one of her students, a Dresden miniature presented on her return from a trip to Europe. While abroad she had purchased a Dresden grand piano still in her collection. Another student brought her a small piano purchased in a nearby city while attending a band festival. This was the beginning of her collection, and since that time she has added all the miniature pianos she could find. When attending the Mozart Festspiel in Salsburg, she purchased a miniature of Mozart at the piano mounted on a small German calendar. So far she has traveled in



*Miniature Harps, Mrs. Maria P. Rensch.*

nine different countries and in the United States looking for additions to her collection. The smallest instrument comes from Enid, Oklahoma. It is a copper grand model with three pedals and measures about three-quarters of an inch each way. Several were purchased in Oklahoma City, one in Washington, D. C., New York City, Fort Smith, Arkansas, Kansas City Missouri, and Dallas, Texas.

Mrs. Maria P. Rensch of Evanston, Illinois professional harpist, is collecting harps. Most of her miniatures are made by her; a French harp, an Irish model, a Salzedo and a modernistic harp with movable pedals. Mrs. Rensch made her first harp model for her daughter's dolls' house, copying her own regular size harp as accurately as possible.

For several years, Gump Incorporated in San Francisco, have imported semi-precious miniatures from China. Ten of these items



*Musical instruments in miniature, made of various semi-precious stones: agate, lapis, crystal, bloodstone, jasper, etc. Chinese.*

*Largest piece 2" long.—Courtesy S. & G. Gump Company.*

are reproductions of Chinese musical instruments in agate, lapis, crystal, bloodstone, jasper and other materials.

### *Miniature Theatre*

A field as yet untouched by American collectors is the famous toy theatre popular in England during the nineteenth century.

As a pastime the toy theatre is dead. The modern child is not interested in juvenile drama; modern radio serials and motion pictures provide all the necessary thrills in make-believe. But from the 1830's until the beginning of the twentieth century, English children and adults found the toy theatre an indispensable hobby. Sir John Everett Millais was enthusiastic about the juvenile drama and relates that he was keenly interested in helping his son prepare the characters, cut out the scenes and conduct rehearsals. The choice of each new play involved twenty-four or thirty changes of characters and scenes. In addition, each character had to be cut out. The upkeep of a toy theatre made heavy demands on a boy's spending money.

Some of the most favorite plays of the past were *The Miller and His Men*, *The Corsican Brothers*, *Guy Fawkes*, *The Red Rover*, *The Vampire*, *Mother Goose*, *Oliver Twist*, *Julius Caesar*, *Othello*, and *Macbeth*.

The origin of the English toy cardboard theatre is yet to be determined. It probably began in Germany where about the middle of the eighteenth century engravers were issuing a series of pictures with figures which could be cut out. It is claimed that J. K. Green introduced the juvenile drama in England in 1808. Another honored name in the toy theatre world is William George Webb who began to publish scenarios and cut-outs in 1838. His son, H. J. Webb carried on the traditional business until his death in the middle 1930's. Benjamin Pollock, the last of the publishers of the Juvenile Drama died in August, 1937.

The juvenile theatre is a rich mine for those who delight in the flavor of an epoch and are convinced that nothing in an age is too trivial to reflect the spirit of the times. In 1830 at the height of the popularity of his hobby, fifty publishers were engaged in the business of reproducing tinsel pictures of popular actors and actresses in roles of the adult theatre of the day. The books and figures were sold in two forms, plain and colored, "penny plain and twopence coloured."

Within recent years school craft magazines have reported that children of grammar school age are making their own toy theatres and characters as part of their craft class projects. But as yet no publisher has undertaken to engrave figures or print scenarios copied from present day stage, screen or radio dramas.

Miss Mary Louise Leshner of Clinton, Iowa, a young miniature collector has recently started to construct, with the aid of her mother, a small stage and a number of silhouettes to be used in a shadow theatre.

In Chicago's Greek settlement on Blue Island Avenue, shadow theatre performances are given on summer evenings. Its performers are painted figures cut from celluloid and manipulated by one or two men with wooden sticks behind an illuminated linen screen. The audience sees only the multicolored forms of these fantastic actors who run through a complete three hour performance every night this strange theatre is open. Each night a different production is presented. Frequently a play like Cinderella, will consume three consecutive nights. The repertoire includes enough figures and scripts for more than one hundred plays. Between each act the lights are turned out while scenery is being changed. When it is necessary for an actor to walk in a different direction, he must be unscrewed from the end of the stick, faced about and refastened. All such changes take place rapidly with the impresario keeping up a steady stream of Greek dialogue.

### THE GRAY COLLECTION

Miniature collectors may include one or two miniature pipes among their oddities but none has collected as many as Joseph H. Gray of Chicago, who, oddly enough, is a non-smoker. His more than two hundred pipes are reproductions of almost every well known variety of American and foreign made pipe in existence today.

To the discriminating pipe smoker, the meerschaum is considered a prize possession. And so it is with Mr. Gray's reproductions. A small piece of the fine white clay mined in Asia Minor and used exclusively for this type of pipe and cigar holder has been shaped into small scale meerschaums, one of which is a copy of a beautifully carved specimen belonging to the present Duke of Windsor. A chip of the hard shelled fruit of the calabash tree has been used to fashion a calabash pipe more suitable, in size, for a charm bracelet than for smoking. America's contribution

to pipe history, the corn cob, also has its place among these miniatures, but a corn cob could not be used since the pits would be out of scale; soft wood was carved to imitate the original material. Indian peace pipes decorated with colorful feathers and pre-historic Indian stone pipes represent more Americana, while unusual bamboo, opium, Turkish water, and animal heads copied from pipe styles popular in central European countries lend an international air to the Gray collection. Most of these pipes measure one inch or less; the smallest, a Congo pipe, measures only three-quarters of an inch long.

Mr. Gray specializes in pipes on a small scale as a result of a visit about five years ago to the Antique Exposition and Hobby Show in Chicago where he saw miniature pipes for the first time. Now his procedure is to hunt for old full-size pipes in cigar stores, pipe repair shops, antique and pawn shops for the guidance of the wood carver who used them as models from which to copy smaller pipes. When his collection was growing, the task of finding unusual pipes was relatively easy but now that his collection has become so extensive, it is more difficult to find pipes not already reproduced.

Within the past two years, a national tobacco advertiser has used sketches of odd pipes to focus attention on magazine advertisements for a brand of tobacco. Many of these models were not represented and the originals were not available for purchase, so Mr. Gray clipped the sketches and sent them to his wood carver who reproduced more than a dozen pipes with these drawings as guides.

This collector was not satisfied to have his pipes mounted on separate cards or boards; he suggested that containers be made. His carver has fashioned a series of hinged wooden boxes with slots in the base, each slot carved to fit a pipe, with as many as ten slots for ten pipes carved in one of these natural wood containers. This method of display not only protects these delicate objects but also shows them to the best advantage.

This collection of pipes, together with thousands of other miniatures are arranged in the attic of his home which is a combination exhibit room, workshop and library. To the rear of this top-story room are hundreds of books dating from the days when Mr. Gray was interested in regular size volumes. In fact, it was through his book collecting that he first conceived the idea

found in the annual November Chicago Antiques Exposition and Hobby Show and while browsing through the Fair some years ago, looking for full-size books, he noticed a miniature edition of Gray's *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*; this became the first small volume of his book collection. Although he still continued to purchase large books, he was becoming more interested in small scale literature. Within a few months, companion volumes joined the *Elegy* and all large books were stored in cabinets or boxes in the back of the attic to be forgotten in favor of miniatures. Of the fifty inch-size volumes he now owns, one is an autograph album for micro-writers, with a few remaining blank pages, and a set of nine books, fitted between two carved ivory book ends, containing many of Edgar Guest's well known poems printed in microscopic letters.

With his thimbleful of books as a start, Mr. Gray soon found the little things in life more intriguing and began collecting many unrelated miniatures. He does not think it wise for a collector to reject an unusual miniature because it is out of his field. From his own experience, he says that over a period of years his miniatures have, without any advance planning, organized themselves into several correlated groups. Although some of his latest acquisitions are still individual pieces, they are the basis of future series. At present, he has but two wooden fans carved from a single piece of wood; an inch long fountain pen holding only one drop of ink is the sole writing miniature in his attic display room; but he hopes to collect more fans and additional writing implements. Several Royal Doulton plates are his only porcelain objects now. A pair of woolen mittens, a sweater and a pair of sox, knitted with split wool fibre on a pair of straight pins may be added to later if Mr. Gray can persuade the aged knitter to continue her work. A few cinnabar and cloisonné pitchers, a sample of English etched glass and a Tiffany ware vase may be the beginning of a vase and pitcher collection, one of the most popular types of collecting. For example five years ago, Mr. Gray had collected just a handful of blown glass animals. Now there are almost two hundred animals in a zoo containing no duplicate creatures. These figures are displayed inside a glass topped end table. Two of the most remarkable reproductions are a dragon and a pheasant; the dragon has a bright red body and wicked white teeth; the pheasant reproduces faithfully all the delicate colorings in the plumage of the male bird.



Two smaller collections also depict animal life in sculpture, ivory and bronze. The bronze animals, primarily of the African or Asiatic variety, lions, tigers, zebras and elephants, were originally carved in Austria and sent to England to be painted. They are collectors' items made for export by European craftsmen.

At one time, Mr. Gray also collected a type of miniature world in which Mexican craftsmen excel, the dressed flea. More than a dozen pairs of fleas constitute part of his doll section; brides and grooms, bicycle riders and acrobats in small white boxes are all dressed fleas. Some enterprising Mexican even went so far as to construct appropriate backgrounds in walnut shells. One scene shows a Mexican bullfight, another a gay caballero serenading his senorita. All four main characters in these diminutive dioramas, caballero, senorita, matador and bull, are dressed fleas.

Next to the fleas are the dolls made of small shells. This collector claims that the smallest of his shell dolls is one-eighth of an inch smaller than the shell doll which was exhibited in Ripley's "Believe It or Not" museum. The Gray doll is three-quarters of an inch high and made of fifty-three shells, more than were used to make the Ripley doll. The larger dolls average approximately one inch high and between forty and fifty shells for each doll. Three of his pottery dolls were originally used in a Chinese temple; they were brought to the United States during the time of the Boxer Rebellion and remained in a private collection until they were purchased by Mr. Gray. Mexico is again represented in this group by several needle dolls, sometimes called thread dolls. These figures, ranging in size from one-quarter inch to one inch, are made of colored silk thread, artfully wound around the end of a stout needle, the thread forming the body and clothes. Several are clothed to represent Mexicans in fiesta dress, others are peons with the characteristic sombrero and serape.

The miscellaneous collection of miniatures among the Gray curios is extensive and varied: profiles of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln carved on the head of a tack; portraits of all United States presidents on the heads of pins; straw pictures from Mexico; the Lord's Prayer on the head of a pin; the smallest electric light bulb in the world; a twelve link chain and a pair of pliers carved from two match sticks; a camel carved from a flake of ivory which will pass through the eye of a needle; a dining room set on the head of a straight pin with four chairs grouped around a rectangular table on which there are dishes; goblets and

silver ware; a poem inscribed on a grain of rice, the collector's name written on one of his hairs, on a grain of rice and also on the edge of a calling card. Mr. Gray contends that American miniature writers are far superior to the Hindus who formerly were the only people in the world who knew the secret of microscopic writing. All examples of micro-writing in his collection are of American origin. As with all other examples owned by miniature enthusiasts, it is impossible to read any of the writing without the aid of a jeweler's glass. An oddity in the form of a calling card bears his full name, Joseph H. Gray. At first glance, this seems to be an ordinary card, but on close inspection, through a magnifying glass, the dot next to the "H" proves, to be a photograph of Mr. Gray.

Miniature art has also interested this collector, such as water colors by Peggy Palmer Burrows, oil paintings, mezzotints and etchings by American artists. The smallest is an oil landscape which measures one thirty-second of an inch by two thirty-seconds of an inch. He also has a series of winter scenes in water color which measure one-quarter by one-eighth of an inch.

In the hardware section is a bottle containing 1,126 screws. For the use of some Lilliputian carpenter there is a complete set of tools. Kitchen utensils are among the metal miniatures, a hand forged pancake turner, paring knives, forks, ladles and a five-eighths of an inch coffee grinder that will grind one coffee bean. An inch and a quarter long knife has thirteen gadgets on it, including a tiny corkscrew and bottle opener.

Although not outstanding, there are several excellent ivory miniatures: a half shell carving of a Chinese tea garden and an intricately carved Chinese mystery ball containing fifteen inner balls, one within the other, each carrying an individual design. Chinese craftsmen have been known to spend ten years completing one of these balls. An elaborate Chinese ivory snuff bottle has more than one hundred and twenty-five painted figures on its surface. Several other ivory oddities from the orient are netsukes. Worn as charms, attached to the inro (a case for tobacco or medicines), these decorative objects were part of a Japanese man's apparel, never worn by the women of Japan. Netsukes in Mr. Gray's collection are figures of street vendors and musicians.

The willi-willi seed from India, found in so many collections, is also considered part of the ivory group, not because the seed

itself is of ivory but because each contains within its hollow interior examples of miniature ivory carving. In one is a complete English alphabet, in another a series of small ivory idols.

Lately Mr. Gray has become interested in miniature perfume bottles. During the last Chicago Hobby Show he was able to add several new bottles and now his collection numbers almost a dozen.

To reach his attic treasure house one must climb a sturdy eight foot ladder. One of Mr. Gray's favorite jokes is that fellow collectors, after visiting his Chicago home, are more impressed with the unique entrance to his display room rather than his miniatures. He will not disclose the total number of objects he has gathered together to make up his fascinating display, he will only divulge that he has more than two hundred pipes. It is a superstition with him that he would lose future good luck in finding oddities if he were to count or catalog all his possessions.



*Emanuel Korman Silhouettes. Left: under the palm tree; center, bull fight; right, racing.*

## Chapter VI

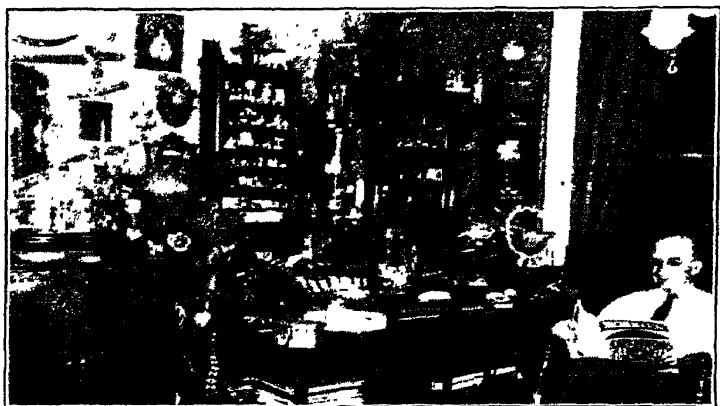
### *Oddities or "Tinies"*

Dramatizing his hobby is the distinguishing characteristic of the collection of Floyd F. Nichols of New York City who has been interested in miniatures for the last twelve years. Rather than exhibit hundreds of unrelated items, he has grouped objects together so that they tell a story.

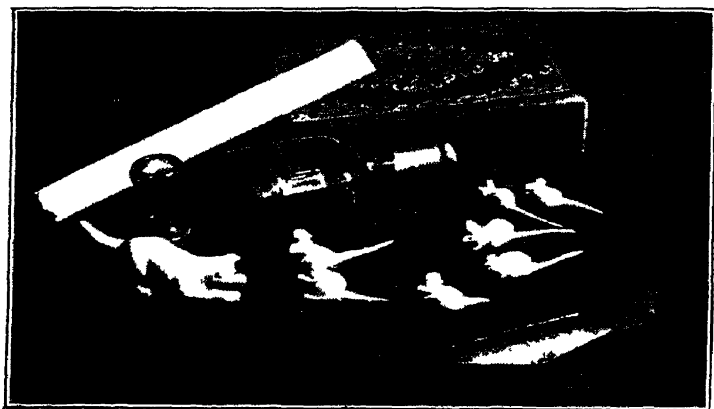
For example, almost every collector's cabinet contains a number of ivory mice. He has mounted a group of them on a small teakwood base; watching them is an ivory cat. Near the cat is a whisky glass and an overturned whisky bottle. A pair of mice are lapping the liquid, while three others are on their way to meet the cat, following in the steps of two mice, sitting on their haunches, who are boldly confronting their traditional foe. Mr. Nichols calls this his dramatization of the old joke about moonshine whisky which cautions that "one drink of it would make a mouse spit in a cat's face."

Several years ago he purchased a set of clay figures from Mexico depicting the action in a bull ring: the matador is carrying a red cloak, the bull already is wounded by lance thrusts; white picadors on horseback carry extra lances with which to infuriate the bull and three mules in harness are dragging a dead horse out of the ring. Each of these figures was too well done to leave them among any miscellaneous grouping so Mr. Nichols constructed an arena; the entire scene is less than four inches in diameter. The outer wall resembles Mexican baked clay. Attached to the opening through which the mules are dragging the horse is a heavy wooden door decorated with metal studs, simulating a gate. More than 180 spectators, men wearing sombreros and women with shawls over their heads, sit on the three tiers of seats. There are a few children in the audience as well as several vendors selling souvenirs and food. Everything but the figures inside the ring was made by Mr. Nichols.

From Austria, a friend brought him a copy of glass animals which were added to others already in his collection and dramatized in a "Sunday Morning Barnyard Concert." The barnyard,



*Floyde F. Nichols himself, sitting beside his miniature cabinets, reading a copy of HOBBIES magazine.*

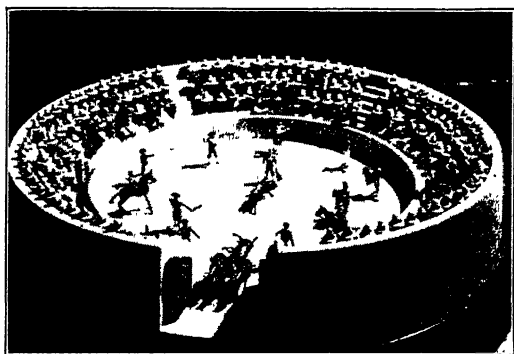


*Nichols uses his miniatures to illustrate the old joke about whiskey, which is: "One taste of our stuff and you'll whip a cat."*

twelve by eighteen inches, is surrounded by an old style rail fence whittled from black walnut lumber sent from his home state, Kansas. The center of interest is a singing quartette composed of a rooster, a goose, a duck and a peacock, all lined up in front of the conductor, a dog, in front of which is the music score on a small rack. Surrounding the quartette are over fifty varieties of glass animals. They create an amusing effect as many of them are not domestic animals. The barn in the corner of this scene is also blown glass and originates from central Europe.

Few miniature collectors are without at least one ivory camel, that can pass through the eye of a needle, illustrating the biblical quotation from St. Matthew XIX, verse 24, "And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Most of these animals are shown mounted on black cloth. Mr. Nichols has attached one of his ivory camels to a thin gold wire alongside a no. 5 needle, the wire being shaped so that when it is pulled away from the needle, the camel mounted on the transverse section of the wire passes completely through the eye of the needle.

One of his most unusual units is his "Pocket Museum." It is a tiny gold locket, less than one-quarter inch wide, one-half inch long and three-sixteenths inch thick. Inside this locket, fifteen miniatures are mounted. On the right side near the top are three carved ivory elephants, directly beneath is a book, leather bound



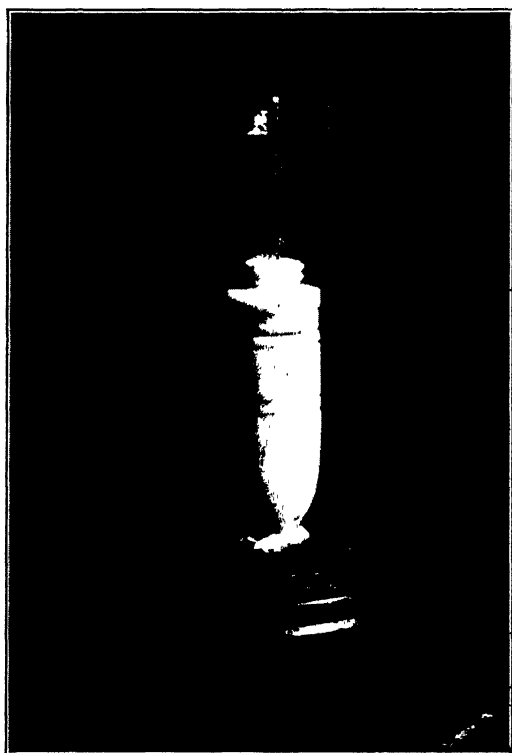
*The Nichols bull-fight arena, part of which he built himself.*



*Part of the miniature collection of Floyd F. Nichols, housed in a cabinet.*

and containing ten hand-written pages. Flanking the book is an oil painting in color, a copy of the famous Currier and Ives print, "The Old Mill in Winter." On the left side of the locket are two dressed fleas, representing Mexican peons, separated by a sea shell. Above the fleas are three portraits, one of Jules Charbneau, Jack Norworth and the third of Floyd F. Nichols. The uppermost row of objects includes a gold souvenir spoon, a gold fish hook, a chip of the Blarney Stone and one of the collector's gray hairs with two lines of writing on it, his name and address.

The whole collection has never been exhibited, but from time to time, Mr. Nichols has displayed several units. One grouping



*Camel-through-the-needle's eye of the Nichols collection.*



was organized especially for an eastern Charity Hobby Show. Inside the base of a Victorian glass dome, formerly used to protect wax or shell flower arrangements, he mounted seventy-four items. It has been his boast that his miniatures represent two hundred different hobbies so in selecting these seventy-four items he used those pieces which would typify fifty-six different hobbies. They include the world's smallest stamp, coin, working radio, olive nut carving, ivory carving, miniature garden, pipe, book, jointed doll, and so on. The display was arranged on a revolving sub-base, with magnifying glasses in front of the smaller miniatures.

During the summer of 1941, Mr. Nichols had one of his most unusual experiences in collecting. While on a motor trip in California, he spent several days in San Francisco; he went directly to Chinatown where he hoped to find many miniatures. He visited one shop after another in the hope of discovering some rare piece but his search was unsuccessful. It was late in the evening, stores were beginning to close, and there was one more bazaar left. He explained to the Chinese proprietor how disappointed he was that all he had found were the usual tourist souvenirs. The proprietor disappeared into his private offices for a few minutes and when he returned he presented Mr. Nichols with a small altar-shaped piece of wood in which were mounted two rice carvings of two Chinese gods. The figures are full length and the carving is perfect when viewed by a glass. This miniature was from the shop owner's private collection and had been made in China by a Buddhist priest. He would accept no money, preferring to present this fine piece to Mr. Nichols so that the trip to Chinatown would not be a disappointment.

Mr. Nichols began collecting small scale articles twelve years ago. At that time he used ordinary business or personal cards and wrote on the back of each one that he wished to purchase tiny and curious objects, but he soon discovered that these cards usually landed in the antique dealer's wastebasket. He then had a "hobby" card printed; *Floyde F. Nichols, Collector of Tinies and Curios*, together with his address and telephone number. Occasionally, in the corner of this hobby card he mounts one of the small gold spoons from his collection. He has five hundred such spoons in a cherry pit. They are handmade and come from China. Experience has taught him that dealers are not so quick to discard such distinctive identifications. One of the difficulties, common to all collectors in this field, was making it clear to general dealers that he was looking for miniature *objects*.

Miniatures have for so long designated small paintings that Mr. Nichols found it simpler to refer to small objects as "tinies." The term has been adopted by several enthusiasts in this branch of hobbies as it is considered to be more descriptive than the word "miniatures."

His first article was a small jack-knife about three-quarters of an inch long. This is still in his possession but has since been surpassed in minuteness by a second jack-knife less than one-half that size. One of his most recent acquisitions is an ordinary safety match whittled into a chain of eight links of three different varieties and a double swivel in the center of the chain. No stringent rules have ever been observed by Mr. Nichols in his collecting, but he says that as time goes on, he finds himself becoming more interested in those smaller items. In this connection, he has what may well be described as the "smallest thing ever made by the hand of man:" a microscopic slide with the Lord's Prayer written on  $1/781,250$  of a square inch. The craftsman who made this fine example had spent much time and money on his hobby of micro-writing. After years of experimenting, this man developed a machine which operated on a principle the reverse of the pantograph. When small writing is done at one end of the machine, the diamond point at the opposite end makes similar impressions on glass but many times reduced. A high power microscope is necessary to read the writing. This miniature was acquired through trading with another collector. Few of his items, however, have been gathered in that manner; most of them were discovered as the result of much window shopping, of carrying on voluminous correspondence with dealers, and browsing through the old Push Cart Market on Orchard Street in New York City before it was closed.

Among the most minute of his tinies is a slender bottle containing a small tube. The outside diameter is  $19/10,000$  of an inch, the inside diameter,  $4/10,000$  of an inch. In the same bottle, with this small nickel tube is a glass tube of about twice the diameter of a human hair. This glass tube is more than three times the diameter of the nickel tube. His most interesting piece is one in which Nature has done the dramatizing rather than he. It is a piece of amber about the size of his thumb. Through the clear amber can be seen a spider, two winged insects and a section of spider web, all just as they were imprisoned in the gum which was changed to amber thousands of years ago. He regards this

as the best possible dramatization of the old nursery rhyme, "Won't you step into my parlor, said the Spider to the Fly."

To new collectors, Mr. Nichols has a word of advice. Ivory figures, silver spoons, flea figures and other minute objects if handled with jeweler's tweezers easily break and the pieces are lost. He recommends using a bit of plasticine or any other non-drying modelling clay whenever extremely small articles must be handled. This clay may be purchased in any art supply store. He says when a dab of the clay has been rolled to a fine point between the thumb and forefinger and then stuck to the end of a pointed instrument such as a pencil, there is sufficient adhesive quality in the clay for it to hold small pieces without harming them.

From furniture reproductions and doll furniture, Mrs. Ruth Taylor Young's interest switched to the microscopic classification of miniatures, spectacles with bows, three-eighths of an inch long in an initialed silver case; manicuring tools three-eighths of an inch long; twelve hand-painted dishes mounted on the space of a dime; and one and one-quarter inch samplers.

Her present interests enable her to collect in different scales and group the objects according to their relative size which, to her, is more interesting than a strict one inch scale grouping.

Among her curios is a pair of gloves that were originally given to Mrs. Tom Thumb. They were too small for Mrs. Thumb to wear but were given to the midget as a souvenir by a New Bedford glove factory when she was appearing in that city. The Thumbs' permanent home was in Middleboro, near New Bedford, Massachusetts. After Mrs. Thumb's death, some of her personal belongings and furniture were sold at auction. An antique dealer, a friend of Mrs. Taylor's, bought many pieces at the auction and from the dealer, Mrs. Taylor purchased the small gloves and Tom Thumb's pine desk, the well type, about the size a seven year old child might use. The oddities include several dozen inexpensive miniatures. Many of her visitors pass by her more rare items to see the wax apple with Adam and Eve molded in wax, dressed fleas mounted in walnut shells, needle dolls, shell dolls and other curiosities that seem to be almost standard items among those hobbyists who prefer the oddities among miniatures.

Lack of space was responsible for the interest of Mrs. Florence Cranston, Bell, California, in the miniature field. For

years she had collected antiques until her house became too small for them. Then she decided to collect objects which did not take up so much room. Into a large old fashioned China closet with five shelves, she began to store her first purchases in the miniature field. In Mexico, she bought a few oddities, small hats and baskets, needle dolls, dressed fleas and pottery sets. She began adding more pieces and everywhere she traveled she searched for different objects to add to her china closet.

Mrs. Cranston has three jointed dolls, each about five-eighths of an inch long. These, too, are standard objects found in almost every oddity collection. Mrs. Thorne uses one of these dolls to represent a child's toy in her model of a southern kitchen. Many other collector's items are duplicated on the shelves of Mrs. Cranston's china closet; sets of painted dishes made of wood, pewter and pottery; shoes from the Orient, Holland, Hawaii, Alaska, Mexico and Indian moccasins; ivory book ends; the camel that goes through the eye of the needle, checker board and checkers; poker chip rack and chips; decks of cards; kitchenware set; manicure set (a duplicate of a set owned by Mrs. Taylor), a sewing set; candy jars with stick candy inside; small oil and water color paintings; and oddities such as the Lord's prayer and the Ten Commandments engraved on the head of a pin.

The item which Mrs. Cranston treasures most is a teaset of painted china. It consists of a tea pot with a lid, sugar bowl, creamer and two cups and saucers. When Mrs. Cranston purchased this miniature, the dealer who sold it, R. V. Fisher, cautioned her to open the package carefully as the pieces of the set are so minute and feather-weight they can be blown away and not easily recovered. The new owner made a special protective case for this piece, using a black button the size of a half dollar as the base and placed the teaset in the center where it barely covers the four holes of the button. Then she used a portion of a glass test tube as a protective covering for the teaset and button. This teaset is duplicated in Jacob Seigle's collection.

Elsie Weinstock of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is also more interested in miniatures of the oddity or microscopic class; a tiny picture painted by Adelbert Boyer, a cottage scene, measuring one-thirty-second by two-thirty-seconds of an inch, sampler on which is embroidered, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep;" and a silhouette of a man playing the piano made by the Baroness Maydell. The Baroness told Miss

Weinstock that it had been announced in a New York paper as the smallest picture of Paderewski ever made; the silhouette was not made to represent the great Polish pianist, she declared.

Some of the Weinstock objects also duplicated in several other collections are as follows: a corn popper which will hold one small grain of corn, a paring knife five-eighths inch long, the blade is three-eighths inch; a magnifying glass one-half inch long with a one-power glass; silver scales, perfectly balanced, which will accurately weigh a hair; a sandalwood folding fan; an ivory chair mounted on a pin head; the Taj Mahal painted on a grain of rice; the microscopic letters E L S I E cut in ivory; eighteen pairs of shoes from several different countries; and games including two sets of dominoes, dice, playing cards, checkers and poker chips.

Several of her small domestic furnishings have been made by a high school boy, William Daub. For instance, he made a group of unusual chairs, three of which are one-eighth by three-eighths of an inch and others ranging from one-half inch to one and one-half inches. A desk, cradle and carpet sweeper were also made by this young craftsman. Miss Weinstock has over 700 items and has been interested in her hobby for six years.

The collection gathered by Miss Audrey Kargere has one rare piece, namely, a miniature war dance costume of the Yosemite Tribe made of hummingbird feathers. The remainder of her collection is duplicated by many other collectors; the "smallest rosary in the world," the camels that go through the eye of the needle, a sewing machine, a phonograph, a radio, scissors, a toaster, chafing dishes, a vacuum cleaner, miniature books including an edition of the *Rose Garden of Omar Khayyam*, spoons, elephants in cherry pits, and dressed fleas.

What makes Miss Kargere's miniature collection unusual is the purpose which it serves. Together with her doll collection, obtained from M. Gerstal, European designer and dressmaker, she has toured the east and middlewest, encouraging the sale of United States War Bonds and Stamps. The dolls represent famous women in European and American history, Queens and wives of Presidents. The theme of Miss Kargere's lecture is to discuss the influence of these famous women on world history, and discuss her miniature collection as products of the patience of the craftsmen who fashioned the objects.

The dealer from whom many collectors have purchased their oddities is R. V. Fisher; he sells dozens of miniatures which fall into the curio classification. Before importations were restricted, as a result of the second World War, Mr. Fisher received a large supply of oddities from the Far East. It is possible to order from Rochester, Pennsylvania, the popular carved animals which fit into a hollowed out willi-willi seed made in India. According to the price the collector wishes to pay, he may have his choice of from six to two hundred carved animals, all in the same size seed. Pin head curiosities are also listed in his catalog; carved chairs, dining room sets, figures, airplanes and photographs of the Presidents mounted on the head of an ordinary pin. Among the pictures painted on grains of rice are the Statue of Liberty, a train, a ship, the Woolworth building in New York city, and the gates of India. Mr. Fisher guarantees that any portrait can be copied on a grain of rice. Several oddities have been pounded into shape from Lincoln pennies, a tea kettle, skillet, candle holder and

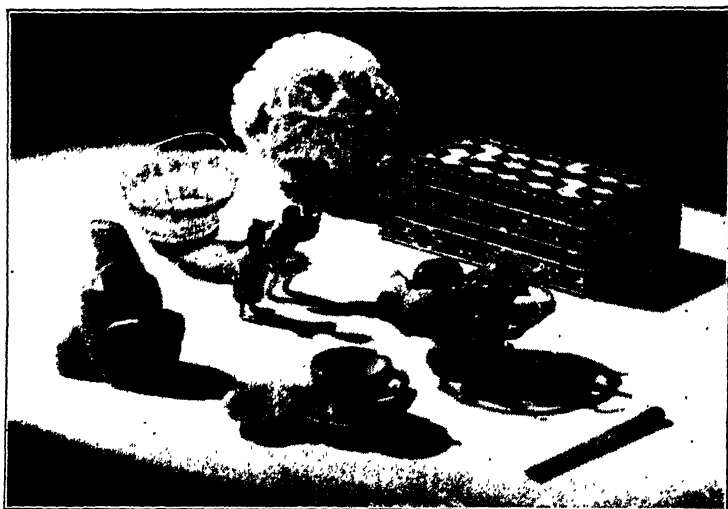


*R. V. Fisher and some miniature pipes.*

canteen. There is a seven piece kitchen set, butcher knife, bread knife, paring knife, potato masher, two pronged fork, long handled spoon and pancake turner, all on small scale. Ships in bottles are favorites among collectors; a full rigged three masted schooner in a two inch round bottle, a one and one-quarter inch long glass pinch bottle and a glass jug, one inch high, both with ships inside.

For the duration of the war, more Mexican and American Indian curios will take the place of those miniature articles no longer available from foreign countries such as India and China.

Standard Mexican miniatures are also in the Fisher price list: needle dolls, hand made straw baskets, hand painted, one-half inch high and dressed fleas. Two types of flea exhibits are made in Mexico; single dressed insects or pairs mounted in miniature shadow boxes, and more elaborate versions constituting miniature dioramas made in hinged walnut shells, each half containing scenic backgrounds and two dressed fleas. Although the scenes vary, they are principally Spanish in character, such as a caballero serenading a senorita on her balcony or a flea matador challenging a flea bull. For the collector furnishing a dolls' house, there are

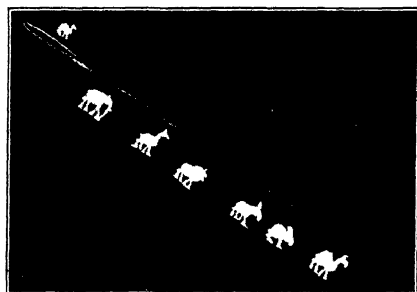


*Oriental and Mexican Miniatures from R. V. Fisher collection.*

many new objects; a sterling silver shaving mug one-half inch high, with a brush to match, a globe of the world made for a dolls' house library, one and one-quarter inches in diameter, a coffee grinder made of wood, seven-eighths of an inch high, with a cannister of coffee beans, a meat grinder, decks of cards, a poker chip stand, a checker set with a board one inch square, samplers, a banjo clock, a manicure set and a wine set.

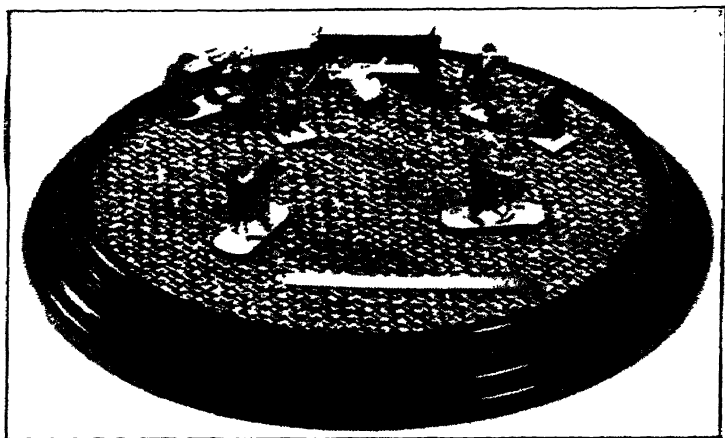
One of the largest importing concerns in the United States, the Leo Kaul Importing Agency, is located in Chicago. Before the war they imported quantities of brass miniatures from Holland, porcelain from Japan and pottery from Germany. After the invasion of Holland they arranged for many of the Dutch miniatures to be copied in this country.

This firm is best known for having started "jugology." The first jug introduced was one and one quarter inches high and contained a Lincoln penny. It created such comment that five other jugs have been added, a parrot in a jug, a blown glass pitcher inside a jug, a jug holding a gilt metal victory button, a gold plated vase or pitcher in a jug and a safety pin in a jug. Easel back cards are furnished with three of the jugs. For the penny, the card reads, "As long as you own me, You'll never be without a cent." The safety pin card cautions, "In case of Emergency Break the Glass" and for the parrot, "This parrot repeated naughty words, That's why he's in the Jug." Although produced originally as curiosities for window displays to attract the attention of passers-by, the fad for collecting these oddities has interested some miniature collectors.



*The camel and other carved ivory animals that pass through the needle's eye. R V. Fisher collection.*





*A musical dance scene.  
R. V. Fisher collection.*



*The Twelve Chinese Signs of the Zodiac in  
jade,  $\frac{3}{4}$ " long. Courtesy S. & G. Gump  
Company.*

## Chapter VII

### *Miniature Books*

Almost without exception every collector mentioned thus far counts several miniature books among his possessions; Jack Norworth has a large collection, J. H. Gray became interested in miniatures in general as a result of his small books, R. V. Fisher owns a half dozen or more illustrated volumes between one and one-eighth by one and three-quarters inches. But some collectors have specialized in books exclusively. A few of these collections are treated in this chapter.

After the first few so-called "smallest books in the world" have been acquired, the collector may direct his attention to older and less easily obtainable volumes, to rare miniature incunabula. The first printed books were usually folio or quarto size; but shortly after the invention of printing, books of a more handy size were made. Soon there developed a rivalry among these early craftsmen to see how small a book could be printed and bound. In some examples on pages measuring three and three-eighths inches by four and three-quarters there was not more than two and one-quarter by three inches of print.

Few private collectors can boast of any fifteenth century miniature books; these are usually found in rare book rooms of nationally or internationally known libraries. The Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris has two imperfect vellum leaves, all the remains of the original *Diurnale Maguntinum* printed by Peter Schoeffer at Mainz about 1468. Among the other miniature books, the Newberry Library of Chicago possesses the *Alphabetum divini Amoris* attributed to Jean Gerson, probably printed about 1491. The print measures forty-one by fifty-eight mm. (one and ten-sixteenths by two and six-sixteenths inches) on a leaf measuring about sixty-one by eighty-six mm. (two and seven-sixteenths by three and six-sixteenths inches). The New York Public Library has a fine collection of small books. The entire collection together with those of many private collectors was exhibited from December, 1928 to April, 1929. The catalog of the Rare Book room of the Library of Congress contains over a thousand titles. There can be found the famous third edition of the *Verbum sempiternum*

by John Taylor, 1765. The oldest miniature volumes in this library are the *Thesaurus spiritualis cum plurimis aliis additis* by Bernardinus de Bustis, 1500/01, *Regula religiosa ac sanctae vitae* of Saint Benedict, 1489/90 and the *Dialogorum liber secundus de vita et mirabilibus* by Gregory the Great, 1490. The only other recorded copy of the *Thesaurus* is in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

One of the miniature treasures of the British Museum is a manuscript book on vellum in an elaborately embossed case of gold with two rings and a clasp. It is a copy of one and three-quarters inches of the metrical version of the penitential psalms in English done by John Cliche, clerk in chancery, for Henry VIII, early in the sixteenth century. Another unusual volume is known as *Anne Boleyn's Gold Book*, a book of psalms translated into English, bound in a gold cover with black enamel on the engraved panels of the book. On the covers, measuring one and seven-eighths by one and three-eighths, are rings to fasten the volume to the girdle. It is said that Anne Boleyn, on the scaffold, gave this book to one of her maids of honor.

One of the largest collections of miniature books ever assembled belonged to Empress Eugénie; there were approximately one thousand volumes, all of which disappeared during the Commune. Today the largest collection owned by any member of European royalty is that in the Library of Queen Mary's Doll's house. There are almanacs, bibles, dictionaries, atlases, histories of England, Shakespeare's complete works, the Koran, as well as the other books already mentioned in the description of the Library contained in the chapter on dolls' houses.

The most extensive collection of miniature books ever assembled, reputed to be the largest in the world, was that assembled by the late James D. Henderson, a Boston real estate dealer, who began his search for minuscule volumes in 1928 and before his death in 1940 had acquired some eight to ten thousand books, from Babylonian tablets made in 3000 B. C., to modern masterpieces as turned out by Sangorski and Sutcliffe, and other contemporary binders, printers and publishers. Every item in the collection is a real book, covering every conceivable subject, written in every language used for the printing of large books and bound in materials varying from human skin to gold, silver, pearl, jade and intricately worked leathers. There are stamp albums, tele-

phone books, music books, newspapers, magazines, novels, bibles, text books, religious tracts, primers, horn books, almanacs, illuminated manuscripts made prior to the invention of printing, and miniature books, dating from early in the second half of the fifteenth century. Some of the books were made for practical purposes and were intended to be read; others are purely examples of the bookmaker's art. All these priceless books are now in the possession of his son, Robert L. Henderson, an officer in the United States Navy.

The elder Mr. Henderson became interested in small books after collecting large size books for many years. He first purchased miniatures in Stratford-on-Avon prior to the last World War, but until 1928, they remained as library curiosities. Then, his son reports, his father experienced an unusual nightmare; he dreamed that miniature books were falling from the ceiling and being thrown through the open windows on his bed. In a letter to the present writer, his son wrote that a miniature Babe Ruth, his father said, was standing on his chest and batting the small books, while other well known figures of the day were pitching and catching them.

The day following this strange experience, Mr. Henderson left Boston for New York, Philadelphia and other cities on the eastern seaboard during the course of which he visited libraries and museums and interviewed numerous book collectors and book dealers. On this occasion he was only able to purchase two or three small volumes which are now considered from a sentimental point of view rather than intrinsic value. Mr. Henderson then proceeded to mail form letters, written in five different language, to the principal book dealers in all parts of the world. As a result, many items were added from European and Asiatic countries. Stories were printed in local newspapers and magazines regarding Mr. Henderson's unusual hobby and other private collectors, learning of his interest in the field, made themselves known to him. Long before his father's death, Robert L. Henderson, began to collect miniatures as well as first editions, while his father's interests were then directed toward building up a collection of children's books.

Mr. Henderson and Wilbur Macey Stone, also a small book enthusiast, decided at the outset that any volume more than three inches high would not be considered by them as a true miniature. There are few volumes in the Henderson group which

exceed this limit, most of them are the size of a two cent stamp or smaller. Among the most minute volumes is the Italian book, the *Galileo a Madame Cristina di Lorena* printed in 1615, measuring fifteen by ten mm. (nine-sixteenths by six-sixteenths of an inch.) Before 1896, another volume, *The Mite*, was known as the "smallest book in the world." Until 1932, when Mr. Eben Frances Thompson printed his "smallest book in the world," the Meigs edition of the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, published in Cleveland around 1900 was given this distinction. The Meigs edition was not the result of trick photography. The books were printed from only twelve copper plates. There were four pages to each plate with three verses of the poem to the page. Fifty-seven copies were printed, measuring five-sixteenths of an inch square and less than one eighth of an inch thick, cloth bound. Two books were presented to the Library of Congress and a small quantity were sold to a few subscribers for \$115 each. At auction sales these miniatures now bring several hundred dollars.

Only after months of experimenting was it possible to produce such a small volume. First, a large type edition was made. Then a photographic reduction, almost to the vanishing point, and from this reduction, copper plates were made, after many failures. When the work was completed, the plates were defaced so no other copies could be printed.

The range in subject matter of the Henderson collection is wide, from cook books to verse, from miniature newspapers to telephone directories. Mr. Henderson acquired a *Gita* in Sanskrit, a *Tasche Kalender* and the *Toras Mosche*, judged the smallest of Jewish books. He purchased one hundred and fifty Bibles, books, written in Dutch, English, German, Icelandic, and Latin. He has a New Testament measuring eleven-sixteenths by nine sixteenths of an inch. Another copy of Fitzgerald's *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* is five-sixteenths of an inch square and can only be read with a magnifying glass.

During his lifetime, Mr. Henderson became acquainted through correspondence with most of the microphiles in the United States and in Europe, of whom there are two dozen in this country and hardly more in Europe. He founded a newspaper devoted entirely to the discussion of small books, entitled *News Letter of the XLIVmos Club*. Each issue appeared from a different city and was underwritten by a microphile living there; some of the editions came from Paris, Mountain View, Baltimore, Perth Amboy, Brook-

line, and Boston. The last issue, No. 21, was published at Amsterdam, November, 1929, and received in the United States in January of 1930. The first number was published in New York and edited by Wilbur Macey Stone. One of the unusual miniature books discussed in these early issues was the Mezuzah (door-post) parchment folded in a metal case two and one half inches long. On the parchment were written the passages of Deuteronomy VI, 4-9 and XI, 13-21, with the name of God (Shaddai) left visible. It was the custom to kiss the finger and touch the Mezuzah upon entering and leaving a household.

Within the pages of this small magazine information was printed concerning rare small books in the United States and the rest of the world. For the information of New England collectors, Mr. Henderson called attention to items in the Widener Library at Harvard which has copies of the *Imitation of Christ* and the single extant copy of the *Verbum sempiternum* printed in 1760 in America. The first miniature book published in America was entitled *A Wedding Ring Fit for the Finger, or the Salve of Divinity on the Sore of Humanity* by William Secker, Boston, printed by T. G. for N. Buttolph.

In his search for small telephone directories, Mr. Henderson discovered that W. E. Rudge of Mount Vernon, New York, had produced a miniature of the New York telephone directory, four and three-quarters by six and one-quarter inches page size. The letters are one-sixtieth of an inch in height and each page contains four pages of the regular size directory. The entire volume is three-quarters of an inch thick.

This collector was also able to find various small books which had been issued as souvenirs of exhibitions, world's fairs and hotels. One of the oldest of this type, printed in 1860, has metal leaves on which are pasted photographs of Maximilian and Carlotta of Mexico. Another book of this type pictures the Imperial family of France in the 1860's. An American version, three-quarters of an inch high, shows Abraham Lincoln and his generals. One of the smallest metal books ever discovered by Mr. Stone shows the American flag on the cover and the title *World's Fair, 1904*, within which are eight views of fair buildings.

One of the most famous of the miniature newspapers is *The London Times* made in 1924. The type form measured two and one-eighth by one and nine-sixteenths of an inch, seven columns to

the page and each column nine-sixteenths of an inch wide. Two American examples of small newspapers are the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, issued October 17, 1913, and the *Boston Evening Transcript*, issued February 9, 1874 to celebrate the removal of that paper to new offices. The *Ledger* is three inches high and is a complete paper of twenty-four pages, the most extensive newspaper of its size ever seen by Mr. Stone. Colleen Moore displays this issue of the *Ledger* in the library of her Palace.

In both the Henderson and Stone collections are books written in shorthand, books of Psalms and the New Testament printed in the shorthand system used during the second half of the seventeenth century. In 1661, Jeremiah Rich wrote the Psalms in meter. His second venture was the transcription of the entire New Testament in shorthand in 1669. The Thomas Shelton system of shorthand, used by Samuel Pepys for his famous diary, was also used to produce a book of Psalms, two and three-eighths by two and three-quarters inches.

Number 8 of the *News Letter* printed a compilation of evidence gathered from collectors, justifying their hobby. As one hobbyist put it, "Mohammedan princes collect wives; empires collect smaller kingdoms; small boys collect strings, nails and so on. There is something inherent in man which bids him collect whatever interests him. Readability of small books has nothing to do with the case." When the impracticality of the hobby is emphasized by some non-collector, one answer has been that, for instance, a stamp collector cannot use his treasures for forwarding letters, the ceramic collector does not serve his family dinner on his specimens, the coin collector does not spend his gold except for more coins. Hence, why should it be necessary that a miniature book collector always be able to read his prized small books? But after all, as most collectors agree, it is never possible to justify to a non-collector's satisfaction that the hobbyist is not wasting his time and money. Some of the more facetious retorts to a non-collector's chiding has been that small books are valuable in that they allow an author to eat his words more easily or that the eyes of a censor are ruined reading small volumes, looking for something to suppress.

Mr. Henderson acquired the finest collection of Jewish miniature books in the world. In addition to those already mentioned is the *Siddur*, the prayer book for the entire year, printed in Amsterdam in 1800, two and one-eighth by one and one-quarter inches.

It is of red leather with silver clasps and contains 280 pages. Most of the prayers are from the Psalms and many are in the Aramaic dialect. Another edition printed in Jerusalem in 1885 is bound in gumwood from the garden of Olives. The *Haggada* which tells the story of the exodus from Egypt and is used on the eve of the Passover, was printed in 1889 in Vilna. It is bound in embossed boards, two and three-quarters by two and one-eighth inches in size. Also printed in Vilna, 1883, is the *Tehilim* (Psalms of David), two and one half by two inches, bound in red embossed cloth and containing 378 pages. Another edition, printed in Pisa, in 1863, has 200 pages. This volume is commonly termed the Hebrew Psalter. The *Toras Mosche* (Teachings of Moses), mentioned previously as the smallest Jewish book, is fifteen-sixteenths by eleven sixteenths of an inch, contains the first five books of the Bible, is bound in calf and was published in Chicago by H. L. Meiter. Among the older Hebrew books is *The Book of Truth and Faith* (*Sefer Emes Ve Emrhor*) by Itzchock Arubash, printed in Hebrew and Italian in Venice, 1672, 218 pages and measures three and three-quarters by two and one-half inches.

An unusual Oriental book is a Cho-cho or Chi-Chi, a fortune telling device used by both the Japanese and Chinese. The text is printed on accordion folded sheets with bamboo ends, measuring one and five-eighths by five-eighths inches. Accompanying this is a wooden hexagonal cylinder with bone ends containing bone sticks. By shaking the box, a numbered bone stick pops out of a hole in the end. This number is compared with a similar one in the text and that fortune is read. Small Oriental prayer books are made on the same principle.

Among Mr. Henderson's collection of telephone books is a volume, two and five-eighths by one and seven-eighths, made for the use of Geisha girls in Japan for their convenience in directing the attention of their clients to further sources of entertainment. The book contains the telephone numbers of theatres, actors, teachers of dancing, voice instruction, and instructors for musical instruments, as well as motion picture theatres, numbers of comedians, wrestlers, arenas and taxicab companies, all in the cities of Tokio and Yokahama. A separate volume devoted to eating places in Japanese cities gives telephone numbers for both Kiota and European cooking.

The one religious book among these Japanese volumes is a translation from the Sanskrit version of *Hearts of Wisdom*, (O



*Mamori Han Nia Shingio*.) This Buddhist prayer book is three by one inches and folds in the fashion of the accordion; it is a miniature of the larger size prayer books used only by Buddhist priests in the temple. The Buddhists began to use these folding books about 1320 A.D.; before that time, the scroll recorded their service. These miniature books are carried in a little bag on the person of the worshipper like scapular medals worn by Catholics. In the preface of the Buddhist prayer book, is a paragraph which reads: "If you keep this in your pocket always, it will protect you from evil and accident. Happiness and prosperity will come to the younger generation."

Here too is an unusual Japanese towel book, made of blue cloth and folded to form a book of eight pages, six by three and three-quarters inches. Each page is designed to be complete in itself with legend and illustration. By cutting the threads which bind the pages it becomes a towel. The first outside page which would be the outside book cover of an English book carries the words, *Umi-No-Heitai*, meaning *Marines*. Page two is entitled *Nippon-Kaugun-Banzai*, meaning *Long Live the Japanese Navy*, and illustrated with a picture of a Japanese ship. Other pages are devoted to similar military subjects showing sailors saluting the navy flag and so on.

The most ingenious Chinese volume is a printed crib book for use in Civil Service examinations. The questions and answers for the examinations were printed in small paper bound volumes and were so shaped that they could be rolled up and hidden in the scholar's queue. When the scholar arrived at the examining place, he would purchase his crib book, hide it in his pigtail, and proceed to take his examination. His final grade and subsequent position in the Government was determined by the amount of money he had paid for the book which in turn enabled him to pass with a high, medium or low mark.

Miniature books have even played an important role in wars. During the first World War, the Mohammedans in Arabia were causing the British trouble. The famous Lawrence was sent to iron out the difficulties and keep the Arabs from going over to the German side. At the same time, the English authorities commissioned David Bryce of Scotland to publish the Mohammedan Koran in miniature. The book was presented to the Arabs in a small metal case with a magnifying glass on the front cover. They served their purpose well, for the Mohammedans felt the

gift was an indication that the British were friendly and sympathetic allies. The Mohammedan soldiers further believed that wearing one of these little lockets containing the Koran assured them a place on the right side of Allah should they be killed.

The famous *News Letter of the XLIVmos*, founded by Mr. Henderson, claims the distinction of being the first newspaper to travel the ocean by air. One copy was printed in Munich and was mailed in an envelope on the "Graf Zeppelin" when it made its first trip to the United States. His books received much recognition through frequent exhibitions in the United States, two trips to England for display there, and on three different occasions newsreel pictures were taken of them.

The collection of the late Wilbur Macey Stone of West Englewood, New Jersey, has been divided between his son and daughter. One of Mr. Stone's finest contributions to the history of small books is a book written by him in 1928 entitled *The Thumb Bible of John Taylor*, discussing the *Verbum sempiternum* by John Taylor.

The two deans of miniature book collecting, Henderson and Stone, are dead but many of their acquaintances have carried on the hobby, despite the disagreement as to what constitutes a miniature book. Some collectors believe that anything under four inches should be included, others believe that three inches should be the maximum and still another group proposes that a volume over two and one-half inches is not a miniature.

The relative size of miniatures has not influenced the collecting of George A. Ball of Muncie, Indiana, as his largest division is children's books, amounting to nearly ten thousand items. Among them are over fifty horn books which, he has been told, is the largest collection of its kind. The Library of Congress has very few horn books. Mr. Ball's regular collection of miniature books numbers 600 items, not including what he calls his Omar Khayyam collection. The greater portion of his items were printed in England prior to 1850, some as early as 1700, approximately one third are French and a smaller number are American.

A book measuring less than four inches is a miniature for Mrs. Alfred E. Hamill of Lake Forest, Illinois. While she has many books slightly above this height, there are about one hundred under this size. Her oldest, circa 1480, and most prized manu-

script book is two by one and a half inches, *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis* written in a fine Gothic hand on thin vellum. Besides many calligraphic spiral ornaments in red and blue ink, the initials are gold and green. The chief beauty of the volume lies in the nine full page miniatures attributed to the Milanese artist, Christoforo de Predis. It is bound in a richly gilt morocco binding of the eighteenth century.

Next in time and in interest is a manuscript prayer book two and three quarters by two inches, bound in velvet with silver corners and clasps, written on vellum about 1650 by an eighty year old prisoner, Jerome Ortyl. At the end of his unfortunate life, this man believed his crimes expiated because he had written this book. The last pages are of greatest interest because they include single chapters from the gospels written in a microscopic hand compressed into small circles of gilt ornaments.

Mrs. Hamill's earliest printed book is a copy of *Moriae Encomium*, (Praise of Folly), by Erasmus, published in Amsterdam in 1629 by William Blaeu, three and one half by one and seven-eighths inches. Her smallest book is an Omar less than one eighth of an inch high by three thirty-seconds of an inch wide, bound in red goatskin with a paper label bearing the title *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*. She also owns a Koran, one and one sixteenths by thirteen-sixteenths, an English dictionary, one by one and one-half inches and the celebrated *Galileo* which like the Omars is duplicated in many collections.

For ten years, Miss Frances Dunn, a Saginaw, Michigan, librarian has been collecting miniature books. Children's books first interested her, then miniatures. Of the latter she now possesses two hundred volumes. Since her working day is spent in a world of books, her opportunities for securing literary finds have been excellent.

She considers her most valuable small book to be the *Galileo* and *The Rose Garden of Omar Khayyam*. Among her almanacs are a dozen from London, all in tooled morocco leather with matching slip cases, engraved and printed annually beginning with the year 1682 to the middle of the nineteenth century. She also has more than a score of the thumb Bibles, including one printed for Elizabeth Newberry, two volumes of Psalms and the New Testament, printed in London about 1660. *My Tiny Alphabet*

*Book*, her smallest color book, has plates of birds and animals. An English classic, *Gray's Elegy*, is bound in leather, measuring only one half inch by eleven-sixteenths of an inch. As a curiosity, Miss Dunn also retains her copy of *The Mite*.

Although Miss Ruth E. Adomeit of Cleveland, Ohio, has had some of her books for fifteen years, her collection has really been made within the last four years. It is divided into two parts, the miniatures under two and one half inches high, and those volumes from two and one half inches to three and one half inches high. Of her bound volumes, she has forty-six which fall into the latter size classification; of the unbound volumes, she owns 148 all under three and one half inches. Miss Adomeit has cataloged her smallest books as follows:

36 under 1½ inches high, bound  
46 1½ to 2 inches high, bound  
16 2 to 2½ inches high, bound  
96 under 2½ inches high, bound

Of her magazines and newspapers, there are two miniature copies of *Life*, dating from 1920; the remainder are copies of *Punch*, *Fliegende Blätter*, and the *Toronto Daily Mail* from 1887.

Her most beautiful miniature is *The Sun* by Harry Crosby, printed by the Black Sun Press, Paris, 1929, in a limited edition of one hundred copies. Printed from three point type, it measures one inch high by three-quarters of an inch and is bound in red leather, tooled in gold with a row of stars down the spine and the sun on both the front and back covers. *My Tiny Alphabet Book*, another copy of the volume in Miss Dunn's collection, also comes from the press of David Bryce, the printer who made the Mohammedan Korans for the British Government. Among her almanacs are the *Bijou Picture of Paris* and the *Bijou Picture of London*, each less than one and one quarter inches high, filled with steel engravings of famous buildings and monuments of the two cities.

Like most small book collectors, Miss Adomeit has been interested in Bible histories and at present has twenty-one different editions of these. She also possesses two Newberry Bibles printed in 1780 in London, bound in red tooled and inlaid leather, illustrated with engravings. Three other items which can be found on book collectors' shelves are the Kingsport Press books, *Addresses of Abraham Lincoln*, *Washington's Farewell Address*, and *Extracts from the Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge*. The Kingsport Press

does not as a rule print miniature books; these three volumes were issued as a sales medium. The *Addresses of Abraham Lincoln* was Miss Adomeit's first miniature book, received in September, 1929, when it was issued as a souvenir for the members of the American Institute of Graphic Arts and given to her by her father. She is the only collector known to the present writer who has had bookplates made for her miniatures. They are available in three sizes, made to fit all of her volumes.

Before going to press, a letter was received from Miss Adomeit announcing that a collection of sixty miniature books, ordered by cable months previously, had arrived safely from England. All volumes are under two inches high. The oldest of these books, now the oldest in her entire collection contains one hundred and ninety-four pages and is one and one-eighth inches high by seven-eighths inches wide, bound in tooled morocco. It is the *Exercices du Chrétien* printed from type in Paris in 1733 by J. Francois Hérissant; another copy of the book is in the Rubinstein model of a French Provincial room. Many David Bryce books are included in this collection; several copies of the Bryce Bible, reported to be the smallest complete Bible, a copy of the reduced facsimile of Burns' Poems, Kilmarnock 1776 edition, a copy of the Bryce Koran in a metal case, and his famous New Testament encased in leather, eleven-sixteenths inches high by nine-sixteenths inches wide. There are nine copies of *Schloss's English Bijou Almanacs* for the years 1837 to 1842, each approximately three-quarters of an inch high, some leather bound and others in slip cases. In addition to these usual leather bindings, finely tooled, Miss Adomeit reports that two of these volumes have ivory covers and another is bound in mother of pearl.

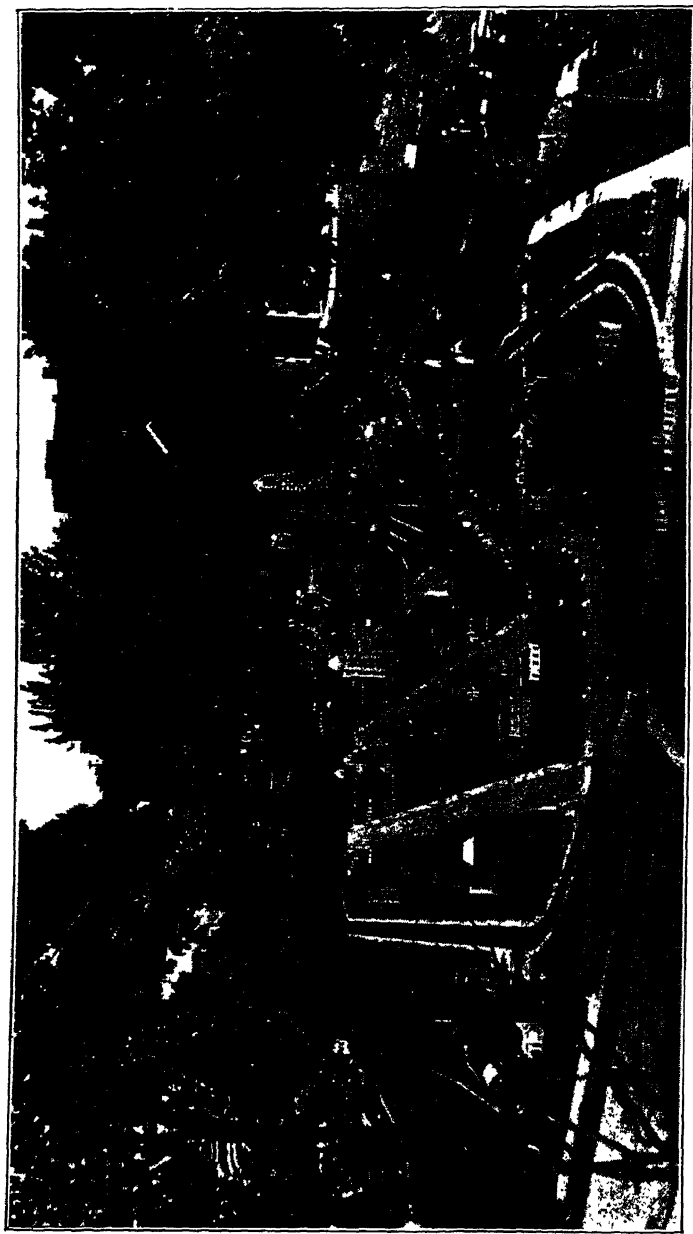
More than ten years ago, Dr. Charles D. Humbert of Barnard, Missouri, whose hobbies are astronomy and medicine, acquired several miniature books relating to both subjects; the *Pocket Medical Lexicon* published in New York in 1884 by William Wood and Company; the *Student's Pocket Prescription*, a sixth edition published in Edinburgh, in 1919 by E. and S. Livingstone; *Short Notes on Anatomy*, a second edition, also published in Edinburgh in 1920 by the same firm; and miniature work on astronomy entitled, *Guide to the Constellations for Ten Year Olds*, published without date by Youth's Companion. Dr. Humbert was one of the subscribers to Mr. Henderson's *News Letter* and still retains his interest in his hobby although in recent years he has added nothing significant to his collection.

Lawrence B. Romaine of Weathercock House, Middleboro, Massachusetts, has a few children's books in his collection, several Bible histories and a dozen almanacs covering the period 1882 to 1895. The Charles E. Tuttle Company of Rutland, Vermont, has a much larger selection, ranging from publications of 1811 to 1863 and almost exclusively Bible histories, children's books and almanacs. The smallest volume is the *Life and Services of General Franklin Pierce*, measuring one inch by one and three-eighths. Most of the Bible histories and prayer books in the Tuttle collection were published by the American Tract Company.

Many small book collections have been broken up during the last five years and since few collectors have kept catalogs, information about these collections is not available.

Data concerning President Roosevelt's miniature book collection are not for publication. All that is known is that the President of the United States has fifteen separate collections, including stamps, ship models and nautical prints, and some miniature books.





*Miniature depicting the metropolis of Traverse City, Courtesy of the Chamber of Commerce, Traverse City, Mich.*

## Chapter VIII

### *Outdoor Miniature Displays*

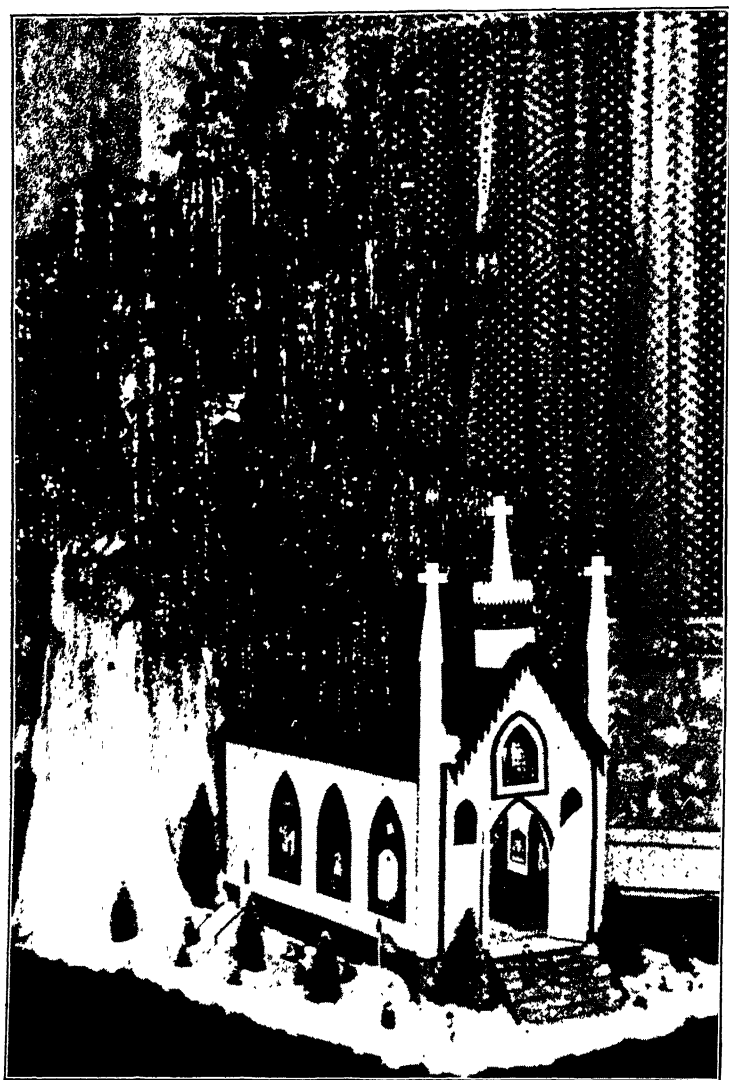
Within recent years, few modern exhibitions, such as flower shows or fairs, have been without a miniature display of some type, usually an entire model city, part of a residential or a business district. Throughout the middle west, signs along the highways invite tourists to view "the smallest city in the world", which usually proves to be an outdoor display of small buildings grouped around a miniature railroad. There are many such exhibits in southern Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. The best known outdoor display is in Traverse City, Michigan.

On what was once the sawdust pile of a huge sawmill, close to the heart of the business section is a replica of Traverse City in miniature. The model contains nearly two hundred structures, a sawmill, airport, passenger and logging trains, the animation operated by a coin machine. Behind the miniature city is the story of a showman, the late Con Foster, former assistant treasurer of the Barnum and Bailey Circus, who found himself in this small city as theater manager, far from the big top and sawdust rings. Mr. Foster so loved the menagerie of the circus that he started to assemble one of his own, using the old mill property on the outskirts of Traverse City to house a collection of native Michigan animals and an aquarium of native fish.

During the depression of the early 1930's, many local cabinet makers were without work. Mr. Foster, then Mayor of the city, secured a PWA grant for the construction of the miniature city, hiring the cabinet workers to carve buildings to scale. For several years, additional structures were added until every public edifice in the city has been duplicated. The entire arrangement takes a plot of ground about two hundred feet long by thirty feet wide.

An Iron Mountain (Michigan) retired lumberman, William Monigal, spent eight years carving a complete reproduction of an old style lumber camp, telling the story in miniature of what happens to a tree from the forest to the sawmill. He started in 1933 with a team of toy wooden horses whittled for his child. Today the exhibit weighs 1,300 pounds and measures fifty feet





*A church, used as an indoor Christmas display, the handiwork of Harvey L. Brown, Chicago. The Christmas tree stand was built into the back of the church, hidden from view by the altars.*

by twelve feet; one hundred and thirty-four wooden horses, one hundred fifty-six lumberjacks, three yokes of oxen, three log jammers and a complete set of camp buildings with snow-covered roofs form the main portion of the display. Felt hats were used to make the harnesses; several old telephone poles were whittled to form the forty log sleighs, houses, men and animals.

To any one familiar with lumbering, Mr. Monigal's camp model is authentic, even to the colors he used in painting the big cookhouse, the traveau and supply sleigh runners. There are fifty sets of sleighs, a jack-knife dray, a Raymond log jammer, scores of trees, the hookon men, toploaders, sky-pilots, road monkeys, bull cooks, swampers, wood butchers, water boys, pigs and even camp dogs. This carver has not missed a single detail. From the horses' harnesses dangle the ball hammers lumberjacks once used to knock ice off horses' shoes. The owner accompanys his exhibit wherever it is shown, at sportsmen's shows or at conservation and forestry displays, explaining to visitors the functions of the various parts of his miniature camp.

In Buffalo, Joseph Klein has been constructing, for the last eighteen years, a miniature village which now has more than 1,000 pieces. The lighting system for this exhibit requires more than 400 feet of wire. In Fresno, California, is a complete miniature New England city on the lawns of the Fresno, County Nutritional Home. The display was built entirely by the children living at the home. In Sacramento, California, during the past two years, Jack Heffner has been engaged in assembling a model of a boom town in the oil district. The panel measures twelve by fifteen feet and is complete with oil derricks, electric trains, a theater, dance hall, bank restaurant and livestock corral. For the last seven years, Irving A. Kempf of Port Huron, Michigan, has been constructing a *Little World's Fair*, a mechanical city representing an average American town. It is a forty-five foot replica and contains 17,000 moving parts. The city contains factories, rivers, homes, business blocks, dozens of street cars and automobiles. In the model farm, just outside the city limits, farm implements harvest grain.

Although he cannot be classed as a collector of miniatures, Moise Potvin's animated wood carvings are of interest to persons who appreciate craftsmanship in small scale. Born in French Canada, Mr. Potvin became a violin maker. Due to his skill with the jackknife and his natural aptitude for reproducing objects in



*This African scene in miniature was built by Willard Simmonds.*

wood, he specialized in scenes from real life. Over a period of twenty-five years he reproduced twelve animated wooden dioramas entitled, *The Face Upon the Floor*, *Home, Sweet Home*, *Story Without Words*, *The One-Piece Bathing Suit*, *The Roosevelt Cabinet*, *The Village Blacksmith*, *Stampede of Texas Longhorns*, *The Detour*, *Pioneering Days*, *Potvin*, *Violin Maker*, *A Little Bit of Ireland* and *New Year's Eve in Canada*. Animation has been arranged in various ways; the blacksmith's wooden anvil strikes sparks while horses shoo flies with their tails and two old timers play checkers over in one corner of the blacksmith shop scene; in *Scene Without Words*, a mouse darts from his hole and runs back when it spies a cat; feverish activity of an old French Canadian family preparing for the New Year's feast is depicted by the grandmother at her spinning wheel, the mother rolling dough for a pie, the father busy cutting meat, the grandfather pouring cider and the daughter removing baked bread from a brick oven.

Each diorama is made entirely of wood; some pieces have been treated to resemble cloth, metal or other materials. One of the scenes, *Home, Sweet Home*, required 6,000 pieces of different woods for the inlaid floor. Without exception, Mr. Potvin's work is on a much larger scale than most miniature collectors prefer. However, it is interesting to this specialized group because of his fine workmanship. Collectors in the East have commented favorably on Mr. Potvin's *Hobbyland* wherever it has been shown at resorts and conventions.

One of the most renowned English outdoor miniature displays is known as *Bekonscot*, constructed by Roland Callingham of Beaconsfield, near London, on a two-acre plot of ground. For six years he worked until the model was completed with half-timbered houses, red brick building with tiled roofs, a post office, speeding passenger and freight trains, a main street shopping district, a flood-lighted airport, luxury hotels and docks for passenger and freight boats, all on the one inch to one foot scale. Dwarf shrubs were selected for variety and shapeliness to provide shade for the diminutive village. On the business street products are displayed in the shop windows; in the electrician's there are electrical appliances; meat in the butcher's; cake and rolls in the baker's. antiques in the antique dealers; even deeds and wills in the lawyer's office. On the outskirts of the village is a hunt course with pink coated horsemen riding to the hounds. Although every visitor, both adults and children, is invited to walk through and examine the models, Mr. Callingham has never yet experienced any thefts

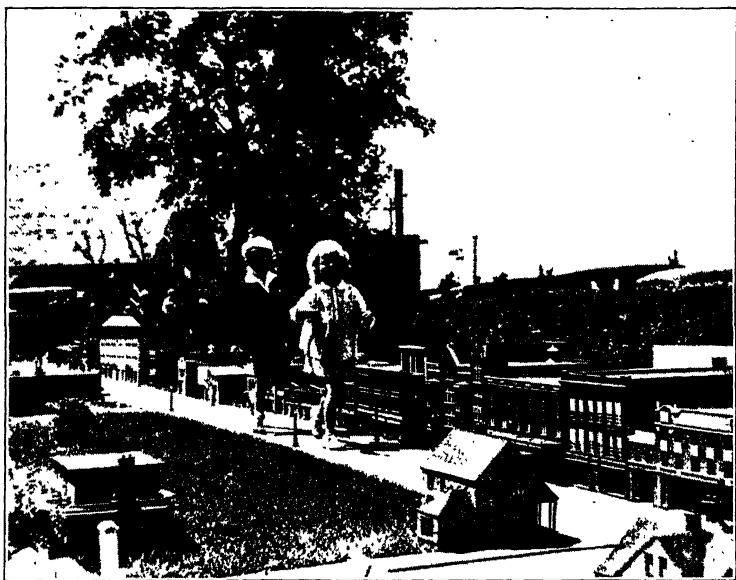


*The Hughes outdoor miniature display.*

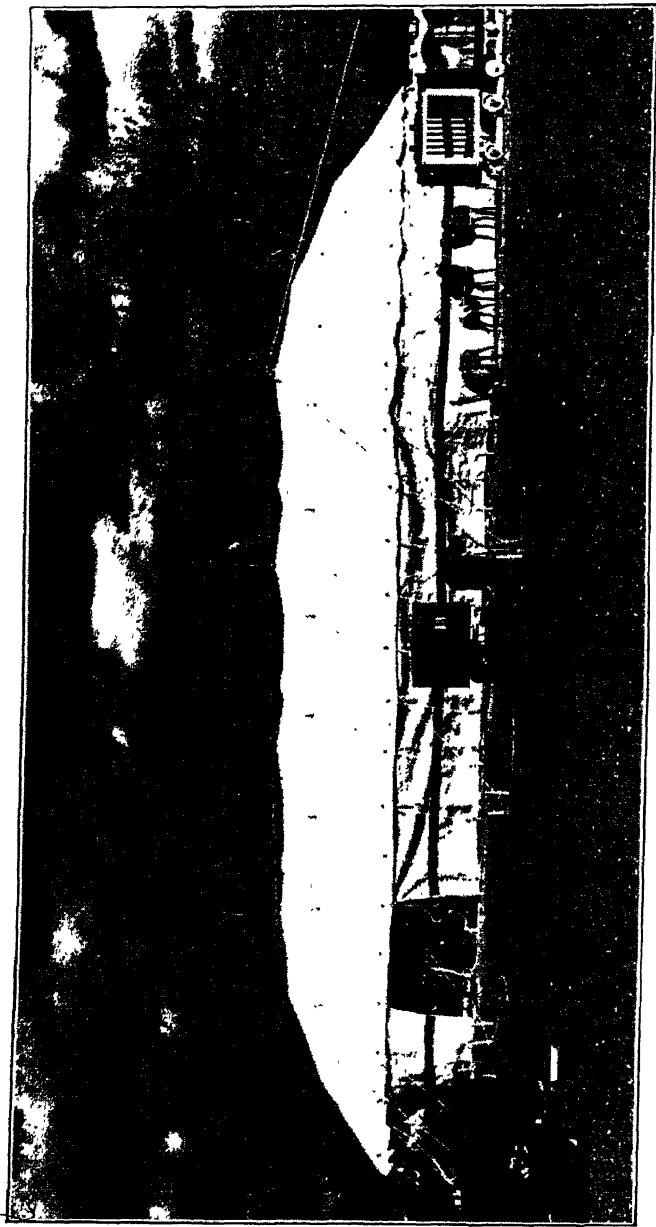
or vandalism of his equipment. When last reported, this exhibition was still open to the public but since it is less than an hour's drive from London, it is assumed that the village is closed and the models packed away for safe-keeping until the war is over.

### *Circuses*

The Circus Model Builders and Owners Association has members all over the United States. They have held frequent regional meetings, but their first national convention was held in 1942. Not every owner of a miniature circus belongs to this association, and the total number of those who collect these special miniatures is necessarily smaller than the number of those who are interested in other small scale models which can be produced in larger quantities than circus animals, tents, sideshows, small billboards and animal wagons.



*Another view of the miniature model of Traverse City, with children towering over the buildings of one of the main streets.*



*One of the most complete miniature circuses in the land. It took Harry Chalfant, a man in his twenties, two years to build it.*

The name of Joe W. Taggart of Rockford, Illinois, is familiar to many circus collectors as he has been engaged in hand carving odd and unusual items necessary for a complete circus and difficult to find in antique shops. Mr. Taggart has completed many pieces for W. Fulton White of Portland, Maine, among them a Ubangi savage, giraffe necked woman from Burma, a Snake Charmer, Siamese Twins, Zip the Monkey Man and a Sword Swallower. These figures are all in scale, one inch to the foot. As another side show attraction for Mr. White's circus, Mr. Taggart has carved a twenty-four foot python, one inch to the foot.

Mr. Taggart has his own display, occupying 3,200 square feet of space when set up on the lawn of his home. All his 30,000 pieces of equipment have been made in the scale of one-half inch to the foot. Two days are necessary for him to set up the twenty tents and accompanying paraphernalia. No detail has been overlooked; the Pullman cars used to carry the performers, trainers and maintenance men, are mounted on regular six-wheeled trucks, each car with built-in berths, the flat cars used to transport the circus wagons have automatic couplings and air brakes.

Mr. Walter Matthie of Long Beach, California, is another collector who has reproduced a real circus in miniature. Within less than three years, he was able to assemble a scale model replica of the Al G. Barnes Wild Animal Circus.

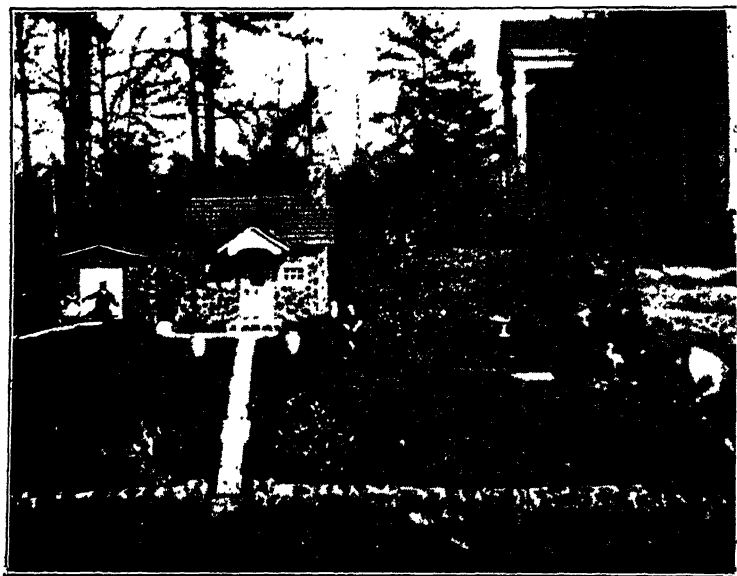
Mr. George H. Barlow, III, of Binghamton, New York, called upon Jim Whalen, boss canvasman, and H. W. Hobson, chief tent draftsman of the Ringling Brothers Circus to assist him in designing and executing the tents for his model circus.

The entire top floor of the home of Clarence A. Kachel in Whitewater, Wisconsin, is devoted to a miniature circus display which took the collector three years to build. It is an exact reproduction of the Ringling Brothers Circus consisting of five hundred and sixty toy people and performers, eleven elephants, fifty-one animals, ninety-nine horses, eight pieces of rolling stock, fifteen tents and one train of twenty-five double length cars. In an effort to make his display as realistic as possible, Mr. Kachel has wired the calliope for sound.

Harry Chalfant of Colorado Springs, Colorado, a young man in his early twenties, has been an enthusiastic circus follower



ever since childhood. He has visited every circus which played within the vicinity of his home and when the itineraries of the larger big top shows omitted that section of Colorado, he started to construct his own miniature circus. The first circus he built was finished in 1935, but it was small and incomplete as compared to his fourth miniature display started in 1939. When finished, there will be eight large tents with one hundred and forty-three square feet of simulated canvas. The main tent contains three rings and bleachers to accommodate thousands of visitors. This collector's greatest pride is in the method used to erect this main tent. The cloth is laid out, arranged and raised exactly the same as regular mammoth circus tents. All main tent poles and supporting miniature block and tackle raises the poles to a vertical position. The canvas is pulled to the peak of the main pole, the quarter poles are pushed out and the tent is up ready for the show to begin. For an added dramatic effect, Mr. Chalfant pulls a cord and four small American flags unfurl from the topmost masts of the big tent. The show is well stocked with animals and all wagons bear the title *Chalfant Mammoth Combined Shows*.



A miniature "dream house" which Mrs. J. F. Clarke built in her yard. The house is furnished completely with miniature furniture in "colonial" style.

## Christmas Displays

Christmas is the one season of the year when miniature displays are found in thousands of American homes, yet many of their owners are not collectors. The custom is to construct small villages or creches at the foot of the Christmas tree; the pleasure derived from complying with this custom has influenced many non-collectors to join the miniature collectors' fraternity. For example, Francis Kramer, now a professional model builder, first tried his skill at these annual displays. Several years ago, Harvey L. Brown of Chicago started assembling buildings for a holiday display, beginning with three painted cardboard houses. The following Christmas more buildings were added and the third year, Mr. Brown constructed several novel features; figures of skiers attached to an endless belt driven by a small motor, giving the effect of sportsmen descending a hill, and in a park in front of the church he placed a piece of frosted glass to simulate an ice pond on which three skaters moved, their actions controlled by a magnet. As this exhibit became more complicated, taking hours to wire and assemble, the idea occurred to this miniature worker to build a church, complete with altar fittings, stations of the cross, and people in the pews. During the Christmas of 1941, this latest achievement was first shown. It is three feet long, three feet high and one and a half feet wide, made of plywood and cardboard, the exterior painted white with red trim, a red roof and the interior, white, blue and gold. The windows are of glass, decorated in transparent oil colors. Although Mr. Brown followed no definite scale in the construction, he has kept all parts in proportion. Above the main entrance of the door is a paned window which conceals a music box playing *Holy Night*, and *Christmas Tree How Green You Are*. Near the doors is a cord to ring the bell on top of the church, a popular feature with young visitors. The three altars and figure of the priest were made from cardboard and balsa wood. Each candlestick is a toothpick, dipped in wax; the monstrance was originally one of Mrs. Brown's earrings; the vigil light is a watch charm (miniature coal miner's lamp); the overhead lights are covers of typewriter ribbon boxes with Christmas tree lights inserted; the pews are cardboard; and the people in the pews were cut from a Sears Roebuck catalog and mounted on cardboard. When on display, the tree stand is obscured by the display and the tree projects from the rear chimney of the church.

The entire display is simple to assemble and can be packed

away in a space not larger than one of the church walls. The walls, front, back and floor of the church hook into each other by means of ordinary screen door hooks and eyes; the roof and ceiling are in three pieces.

Another Chicagoan whose Christmas display was elaborate was the late John H. Cook, a miniature collector. For many years before his death as each holiday approached, Mr. Cook would move the furniture out of one room in his home and set up his display of 1400 to 2000 miniature objects, depicting a countryside scene surrounding a large Christmas tree. Mr. Cook used sawdust dyed green for grass and white sand for country roads.

Mr. and Mrs. Chester Hartman of Dallas used the local St. Paul's Lutheran Church as a model for their Christmas tree display. Other town buildings such as stores and a motion picture house were added and on the outskirts of this small village, the Hartman's placed automobiles and railroad engines.

An Orange, Massachusetts, miniature worker, Oliver W. Brown, sets up his church display on the lawn in front of his home during the holiday season. Inside the structure, Mr. Brown has constructed an organ which, although hidden somewhat by the pews, makes the church look more realistic.

To Anne Turpentine Simmonds' family in Hampton, Virginia, decorating for Christmas has always been a hobby in which every member participated. The custom is to begin soon after Thanksgiving, building scenes in miniature at the base of an elaborately decorated cedar tree. Starting in 1822 when Mrs. Simmonds' eldest son was an infant, it was at first a very simple affair with small figures on one side of the tree, enacting the scene of the Wise Men visiting the stable where Christ was born, and on the opposite side, Santa Claus' house with the reindeer and sleigh waiting in front of the door. As her boys grew older, they took a more active part in the decorating and made many new pieces for the displays. In 1930, the family decided to build the city of Bethlehem, to the right of the manger, and a mountain, showing the Wise Men's approach in the distant sunset. This decoration has grown so large that it now takes two walls of Mrs. Simmonds' sitting room. Lengths of muslin, painted blue to represent the sky, are tacked on the walls as a background for the elaborate enactment of the Christmas story in miniature.

Four years ago, Mrs. Dorothy V. McNutt and her staff of the Science and Industry Department of the Cincinnati Public Library, conceived the idea of having a Christmas tree entirely decorated with products or pictures of products actually manufactured in Cincinnati. As soon as the local manufacturers heard about the plan, two hundred and fifty of them presented samples or miniatures of their products to be hung on the tree. The idea was a huge success for it brought hundreds of people into the library who had not visited it previously. But Mrs. McNutt felt that something was lacking — a miniature house at the base of the tree. Another library Christmas project was instituted to gather furnishings for a local dealer's dolls' house. After two years of planning, the dolls' house was completed in time for display during the season of 1941. When it was taken off exhibit on Christmas Eve, the house and all its furnishings were turned over to the Hamilton County Children's Home. The house is 7½ feet long, 3½ feet wide and 3½ feet high and received as much attention and careful planning as if it had been an adult home. The plans were submitted by the Architects' Association of Cincinnati and the actual construction was taken over by the boys of the Cincinnati Building High School, while the girls at the Cincinnati Sewing High School made the curtains, drapes and all the linens. Approximately \$250.00 worth of doll furniture was donated by the local department stores through the Cincinnati Retail Merchants' Association. Scale models of a furnace and stoker were installed by the Cincinnati Retail Coal Dealers' Association.



*"Old Curiosity Shop" from the Helena Rubinstein Collection.*

## Chapter IX

### *The Rubinstein Collection*

Better known as a cosmetician, Madame Helena Rubinstein is also a prominent collector, having devoted her leisure time during the past thirty-five years to collecting miniatures, Nadelman and African primitive sculpture, modern paintings, ancient books on herbs (which she finds useful in her business), precious jewels and costume jewelry, and souvenir spoons. Collecting is her one extravagance and aside from business, her one absorbing interest.

The number of her antique miniatures is without equal; no other collection contains such a wealth of historical objects. In all of Mrs. Thorne's ninety-six architectural models there are but a few salesmen's samples, whereas Madame Rubinstein's twenty-four rooms on display in her New York salon are furnished exclusively with period objects, none of which has been fashioned by modern craftsmen. Many of the antique pieces which grace this exhibition were made as far back as the sixteenth century, either for dolls' houses or by cabinetmakers as travelers' or salesmen's samples.

Before the outbreak of the second World War, she had another collector's paradise of antiques in her London and Paris homes; a set of furniture bearing Chippendale's signature was in London, in one of her two Paris homes were thirteen more miniature rooms with backgrounds designed by artists such as Dufy, Picasso, Braque, Lurcat and Marcoussis; and also in Paris were enough individual pieces for two hundred additional rooms.

Almost two years were spent in setting up the twenty-four rooms now in the Rubinstein New York Salon. Two architects, Joseph A. Fernandez and Joseph E. Messineo designed the backgrounds, and two artists, Martine Kane and A. Vimnera painted the murals, and created a small quantity of artistic ornaments to decorate the antique furnishings.

Covering the French and Italian, Renaissances, the Tudor, Elizabethan, Biedermeier, Spanish, early American and Second

Empire periods, each room is a complete miniature, architecturally constructed according to the period to which its furnishings belong. The hundreds of small objects such as clocks, sets of dishes in blue, emerald or ruby glass, ancient silver and glass candelabras, fitted sewing baskets, writing desk sets, minute leather bound books illustrated with steel engravings, toilet and shaving articles and diminutive Dutch or English pewter, were all collected by Madame Rubinstein during the last three decades. Bits of brocade, tapestry, sets of solid silver table service and hand decorated porcelain glassware, which for years lay packed away in their original wrappings, now have their niches in the Rubinstein rooms.

One of the miniatures acquired from European royalty is a kitchen, made entirely of copper, purchased from a Hapsburg countess. It represents an Austrian kitchen of the eighteenth century and shows the cook, a wax figure, standing next to a hooded chimney stove holding a small fish, one-half inch long, made of gold mesh links and jointed in four places, enabling it to squirm realistically. On the surrounding smokestained walls are hung "huge" copper kettles, pots, pans and ladles. Opposite the stove is a built-in wooden sink, cupboards and shelves which contain the usual implements of a well equipped kitchen, iron skillets, pie plates, chopping knives, funnels, nutmeg graters, toasters and other appliances. No articles have been substituted or changed in this miniature since it was originally constructed almost three hundred years ago.

Several of the Hapsburgs were reputed to have been enthusiastic miniature collectors; in one of the collections was a kitchen fashioned from solid gold which Madame Rubinstein was unable to obtain.

Two antiques regarded as among the most valuable are hanging on the walls of the Spanish Dining Hall; both are rare etchings on ivory, made in either the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. The dining hall itself measures fifteen inches high, twenty-seven inches wide and twenty-five inches deep. In the recesses are tall, black teakwood cabinets with inlaid panels painted on the right side of the room which is more than two centuries old; beneath is a carved black oak treasure chest with a sliding top and a secret drawer. In the center of the hall, a trencher table is set with solid silver service and lighted by two candelabra. On the side table are a silver soup tureen, chafing dish and bowl of nuts.

A Queen Anne dining room set of six chairs, a table and a sideboard is placed in an attractive background of painted wall-paper and shell-trimmed recessed cabinets in ivory and cream. A six-candle crystal chandelier, probably made for a dolls' house, hangs over the table and dates from the reign of Queen Anne. An ivory table to the left of the room is set with a delicate crystal basket containing papier-maché fruits and a pitcher which will hold only two drops of water.

The Dutch room in the collection is furnished with chairs and a couch upholstered in rose brown velour. A secretaire and pair of commodes decorated with pine inlay are from Holland. At the feet of the figure representing the lady of the house is a work box from which she seems always about to pick up her thimble and scissors. Two eighteenth century samplers on the back wall are no larger than an airmail stamp and the cradle blotter on the desk can easily blot an envelope one-eighth inch square. On top the secretaire is a complete miniature ship model under glass, flanked by a bronze lion and a porcelain vase. Near the window is a wooden bird cage, and beneath the cage on the sill is a pot of morning glories. The floor is of varnished pine and typically Dutch in its absence of rugs, the ceiling is beamed and the walls have an all over Dutch design paper. Through the windows, visitors catch a glimpse of a Dutch garden blooming with colorful flowers.

The scale is approximately one inch to the foot and each room averages two feet in width. Discrepancies in the scale are frequent since only genuine antique miniatures were chosen. There would have been more uniformity if contemporary craftsmen had been commissioned to build more accurately scaled but less charming pieces.

One of the most picturesque is a typically bourgeois French room of the nineteenth century, conservatively respectable, like the monarch whose small picture hangs on the back wall, Louis Philippe. A tall crested pier-glass cabinet is filled with small pieces of china from a forty piece dinner service. Near Paris, Madame Rubinstein discovered the elaborately carved metal furniture around which this room was built; three chairs, a foot stool and a table; all constructed of rococo metal work and decorated with real Venetian petit-point tapestry seats. Of the two unusual tables in this room; one is an odd saucer-shaped French enamel



table inlaid with a row of pearls; and another in the center of the room is of teakwood with ivory inlay of Chinese figures. On its surface are several decorative glass pieces and a porcelain bust of Napoleon shown wearing a tricorne hat.

The Georgian Dining Room is furnished with original Hepplewhite miniatures, sturdily built like life-sized pieces, fitted rather than glued together as is most doll house furniture. The background is in the Adam manner, more conservative than the rooms of this period in the Thorne collection. The table is set with silver plates, goblets, knives and forks and from the ceiling hangs a finely wrought silver chandelier with holders for eighteen candles.

A Versailles Ballroom, all ready for the minuet, is also called the Silver Ballroom; all the chairs, tables, settees, musical instruments including the piano and harp are of solid silver, made during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the center of the back wall is a bay window with a full length statue of Napoleon mounted on marble in lapis lazuli. Ornaments in the ballroom are also made of silver, although there are a few Wedgwood pieces.

The only replica in the series was patterned after an old French Provincial home built in the fifteenth century on La Camargue, and originally occupied by a seafaring family. This one room served as sleeping, eating and cooking quarters. Beneath a Henry II bed are a pair of leather sandals from Normandy, which measure less than an inch long. On the washstand, next to the tin bowl and pitcher, are a silver hair brush, tortoise shell comb and ivory fine-comb, with a few teeth missing. Typically French fifteenth century benches stand at the side of the table in interesting contrast to the eighteenth century comfortable upholstered arm chairs. The mantelpiece is decorated with pewter ware and the fireplace has all its miniature accessories including bellows, seventeenth century red lacquer screens, coal scuttle, tongs and shovel; a concealed electrical contrivance creates the illusion of a fire blazing in the grate. At the table, a figure representing an old retired seaman is reading the Latin text with French annotations of *Exercices du Chretien*; the type, although small, is quite legible. A second figure representing the captain's daughter-in-law is near the windows gazing out at the sea.

A fascinating room is the "Old Curiosity Shop," a miniature antique shop, where five hundred pieces of furniture, ornaments and heterogeneous odds and ends, collected from six countries are "for sale." Metal and porcelain objects of all description are gathered in this shop; elaborate metal lamps and incense burners hang from the roughly beamed ceiling. On shelves against the walls are piled large carved platters; porcelain dinner sets; seventeenth century pieces of carved wood and pewter; postage stamp sized samplers; a tool set, and decorative porcelain pieces including a cat playing a fiddle. In the center of the shop is a table overloaded with more treasures for a Lilliputian bargain hunter; irons, bowls, casks, mirrors on stands; candlesticks and mugs. In the window, looking out upon the narrow street, is a pair of iron garden gnomes and an elaborate eighteenth century clock. The background is perfect and carries out the idea of an old fashioned antique and curio shop. The door leading out into the street is ajar and sags slightly on its hinges. The small twisted iron railing which leads down the few steps into the shop is old and dusty; and the floor is worn smooth from the constant shuffling back and forth of the proprietor waiting on his customers.

The Victorian style is represented in Madame Rubinstein's series by a model room designated by the name of Victor Hugo. The predominant color is red; the walls are of dark red damask, the long fringed carpet is a rich blend of Persian reds and blues and the room is furnished with typical stuffed furniture of the nineteenth century, dark wood frames upholstered in bright red biscuit cushioned satin. On the table are two books, a leather-bound French volume with microscopic illustrations, entitled *Calendrier de la Jeunesse pour l'An, 1805*, and an album containing miniature photographs of Prince Eugene, Prince Charles, his family and other members of royalty. Also on this table is a small snuff box, a real gold tea set, a silver filigree basket of flowers and gold watch the size of a bead. A mahogany what-not is filled with silver, china, glassware and porcelain gathered from all over Europe.

Many of the other rooms typify unusual style trends or periods: for instance, there is what Madame Rubinstein calls the *Lady Lou Room* which might also be called the *Diamond Lil Room* because of its gaudy appointments; a solid ivory suite of furniture is shown in a suitable lacy boudoir setting; an artist's garret of Baudelaire's time is still another subject; and there is also an old eighteenth century Italian kitchen showing the lady giving her

cook instructions on how to flavor the pot of pulenta brewing on a charcoal stove topped by a black hood.

One fantastic room, built many generations ago with strange green French wallpaper, a large crystal chandelier with green crystal lamp globes and an ancient portrait over a mantel, is an heirloom, built within a sort of miniature stage resting on sculptured feet, which belonged to a great-grand aunt of Madame Rubinstein's.

Modern craftsmen can construct minute furnishings on a more accurate scale but they cannot rival Madame Rubinstein's rooms which are more than an exhibition of skill. Her collection is an important and authentic record of the cabinetmaker's art through the centuries.

## Chapter X

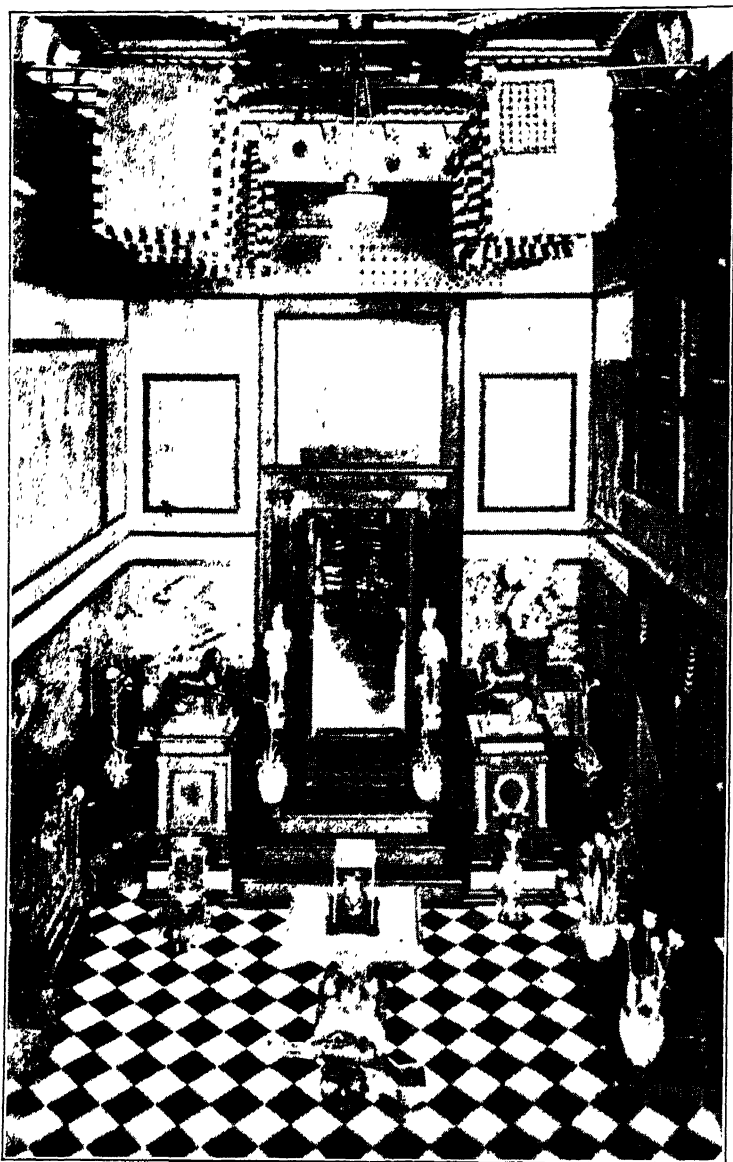
### *Titania's Palace*

In 1942, Titania's Palace was being shown through Canada. This miniature exhibition, second only to the Queen's Doll house in the Victoria and Albert Museum in Kensington, captured the fancy of the people of the Dominion. It is the achievement of Sir Nevile Wilkinson who was awarded an office in the Royal Society of Miniature Painters as a result of his superlative miniature painting in decorating the palace.

The idea of Titania's Palace first came to Sir Nevile at his home, Mount Merrion, situated on a wooded hill a few miles south of Dublin, Ireland. He spent most of the summer of 1907 sketching the surrounding countryside. One day while he was at work at his easel drawing the trunk of an old sycamore tree, his three-year-old daughter said that she saw a fairy disappear among the moss which covered the twisted roots of the weather beaten tree.



*Titania's Palace, The Morning Room, one of the 17 rooms in the Palace.*



*Titania's Palace, Hall of the Guilds, showing the bronze gilt cannon made in 1580.*

This event led to his young daughter's conviction that there must be at the roots of the tree some subterranean dwelling where the fairies, or Little People, took shelter during the daylight, to come out when the moon was up, and perform their customary dances in the fairy rings, which were plainly outlined on the adjacent lawns. In this dwelling were preserved, no doubt, the treasures of Fairyland, gathered together during many ages, and hidden from the eyes of human children. If someone could only build a suitable palace, perhaps the fairies could be persuaded to leave their tree home. This, Sir Neville Wilkinson proposed to do the summer of 1907; he would build a dwelling above the ground where the Fairy Queen and her Court might transfer themselves and their treasures from the sycamore tree.

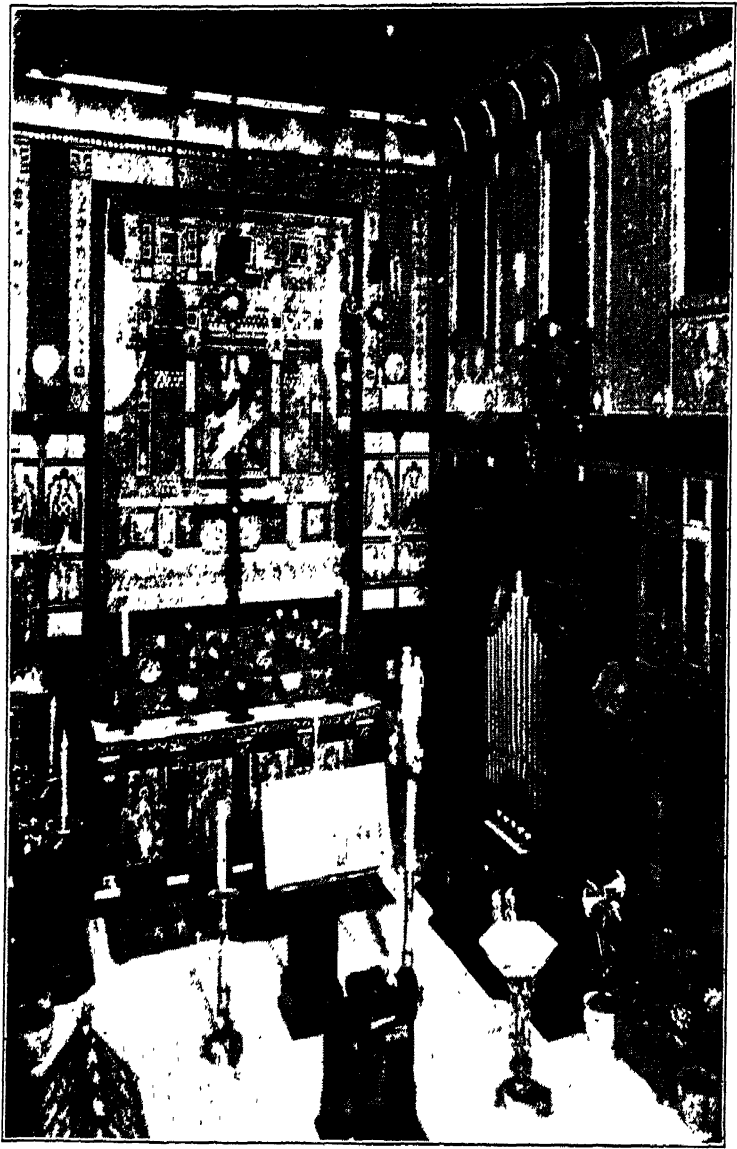
To fulfill the promise made to his daughter, Sir Neville began to draw the plan of a miniature building, which by the beauty of its decoration should be fit for the residence of Her Irescence, the Queen Titania, her Consort Oberon, and the Royal Family of Fairyland. While the exterior was being fashioned in the workshop of James Hicks in Dublin, Sir Neville was using his spare time in making tapestries, mosaics, tiles, frescoes and other decorations using the style of the Italian Renaissance as the motif.

The ground plan of the Palace is in the form of a hollow rectangle, nine feet by seven feet, and twenty-seven inches high. Sixteen rooms, lighted and heated by electricity, are built around a central courtyard.

For fifteen years Sir Neville worked at his task and on July 6, 1922, the twenty-ninth anniversary of the wedding of Queen Mary of England, the Palace was shown to the public at the Woman's Exhibition at Olympia. Since then it has visited more than 140 cities in the British Isles.

Within the rooms are tiny objects of art, collected by the creator of the palace during his thirty-five years of travel which extended as far as Calcutta, Cape Town, and San Francisco.

In the green and gold Hall of the Guilds, the entrance to Titania's fairyland is a bronze-gilt cannon to keep the 'spotted snakes with double tongue and thorny hedgehogs' out of fairyland. The cannon, perfect in every detail, even to the non-skid studs on the iron tires, is the work of Michael Mann, a famous



*Titania's Palace. The Chapel, showing walls and ceiling hand painted by the late Sir Nevile Wilkinson.*

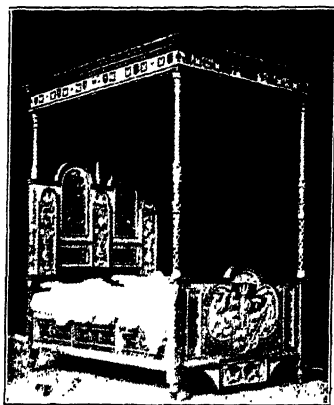
sixteenth century armorer of Nuremberg, and is probably the most perfect specimen of a traveler's sample of that period. There is little doubt that Michael Mann made this sample to advertise some improvement in the mobile ordnance of those days. Sir Nevile reasoned that master armorers of Milan, Toledo and other centers had no postal service available to mail printed and illustrated catalogs and the petty rulers, robber barons or feudal chieftains to whom the goods appealed could not have read such catalogs even if they had been delivered. The roads which then existed led through forests frequented by brigands and outlaws so it would have been foolish to send full sized weapons or armor without an efficient escort. A small scale model could be transported with little difficulty, the would-be purchaser could judge how the real object would appear, he could make suggestions for changes and then place his order.

To the left of the cannon, standing upon a carved and gilt side table with a painted mosaic top, is the Golden Fountain of Youth, whose diamond drops sparkle as they fall into the decorative basin. Beside the table stands a tiny treasure-chest, with a lock on the lid, the work of a Nuremberg craftsman of the fifteenth century.

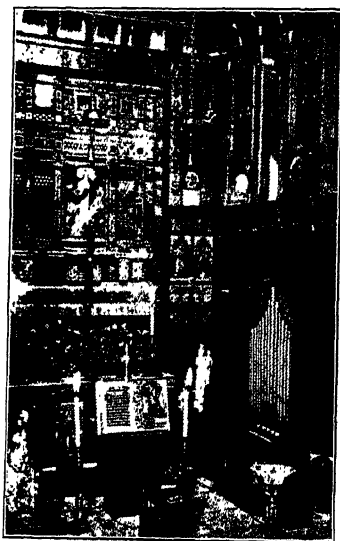
On either side of the rear doorway stand miniature silver French military figures of the Second Empire, while farther to the right is an Indo-Portuguese chest supporting a carved box-wood figure of St. George and the Dragon. Opposite this is an Italian casket made of old amber inlaid with ivory carvings, which once formed the base of a seventeenth century crucifix. The Hall of the Guilds contains several specimens of potted brass flowers made by Miss Beatrice Hindley; most of the rooms throughout the Palace show examples of Miss Hindley's handicraft.

The background of the Hall, walls, floor and ceiling are elaborate. The floor, twenty-one inches by twenty, is laid with alternate slabs of black and white marble, each one inch square. The dado is of green Connemara marble. Above it the walls are of gold mosaic on which Sir Nevile painted fairies holding in their hands the shields of the great Guilds of ancient Florence. Above the mosaic there is a deep frieze of tiles, blue, green and gold. The ceiling is coffered and inset with gold arabesque panels, each containing the coat of arms of a great Florentine family.





*Titania's Palace, The Royal Bed,  
with carved ivories.*



*Smaller view of the Chapel,  
Titania's Palace*

The next Hall is used principally for dancing, and as the meeting place for Chapters of the Order of the Fairy Kiss, a mythical organization founded by Sir Nevile. A remarkable bronze gilt table stands in the center. It is of the Louis XV period and on it is an Italian casket displaying the Grand Cross of the Order of the Fairy Kiss. Near the table is the Royal Sleigh, a handsome vehicle made available at Christmas to Santa Claus; a toy carrier was added to make the sleigh more useful.

Less fanciful but more impressive are other objects in this Hall. On a carved stand is a gold and enamel horse of Indian craftsmanship, inlaid with uncut diamonds, representing the steed which bore the Persian Prince on his journey in the *Thousand and One Nights*. There are also a pair of Chinese vases of the Ming period on lapis-lazuli bases, an Italian Renaissance bronze figure of a dancing faun, a statue of Venus unlacing her sandal mounted on a porphyry base, an ivory statuette of Flora and a pair of Florentine carved ebony lions.

One of the outstanding modern works in the Hall is the Minstrel Gallery, a masterpiece of cabinet making by Thomas Lennon, taken from the designs of Sir Nevile Wilkinson. The gallery contains four classical figures of French seventeenth century work, two bronze-gilt figures made in Italy in the sixteenth century, a piece of repoussé work in silver by Joseph Barker and early Italian ivory figures representing three of the senses. To the right of the Minstrel Gallery, is a staircase of original design. Upon it are early Italian bronze and silver figures and a plaque representing an Italian warrior, little more than an inch high. The doorway leading to the gallery is set with a sixteenth century oval of engraved rock crystal.

Miniature portraits of both Queen Mary and Queen Alexandra hang in the Hall; the latter portrait was painted in 1908 to celebrate the opening of Sir Nevile's first model house, the former was painted at the Queen's request. Two small silver lanterns which hang on either side of Oberon's banner were presented to him by Queen Mary.

The floor of this Hall of the Fairy Kiss was inlaid by Colonel Gillespie, and contains two thousand separate pieces. Like the Hall of the Guilds, the dado is also of green Connemara marble and the walls above are of gold mosaic. The frieze contains four hundred tiles, every alternate tile displaying the badge

of the Fairy Queen, an orange butterfly surmounted by a coronet with three pearls. The coving represents a series of rainbows, the insignia of the Order of the Fairy Kiss. The ceiling is principally decorated with gold arabesques and contains the badges of the Order and the motto *Nihil sine labore, Nothing without Labor*.

In Titania's private oratory, (which is the same size as the Hall of the Guilds) on a carved choral stand lies a French illuminated *Book of Hours*, written on vellum. Sir Neville found this *Book of Hours* in a shop on a back street in Cologne. After purchasing it, he mailed it to the British Museum. The curator informed him that the book was of French origin, written about 1450 and was probably made for a child. The *Book of Hours* may be compared with any modern religious book which lists daily scriptures and prayers. These volumes were illuminated and written by monks until after the invention of printing when they were made by the thousands, miniatures for children and larger and more elaborate books for adults. Since these printed *Books of Hours* were so common, no effort was made to save them and few are now available for collectors of miniature books.

The holy water font is made from the private seal of the Duke of Leinster. On the prie-dieu hangs one of the smallest rosaries in the world. Above the altar rises a beautiful reproduction of the famous Cross of Cong, dating from the tenth century and now in the Dublin Museum. Below the cross is the Ardagh chalice with all its interlacing work and enamels faithfully represented. Both these miniatures are the work of Mia Cranwill of Dublin. The original cross and chalice are believed to be the earliest pieces of church work in the British Isles.

The reredos, twelve inches by fourteen inches, is the work of Sir Neville Wilkinson and took him four years to complete. The center picture represents Murillo's Assumption of the Virgin. The surrounding design is original and earned Sir Neville a vice-presidency in the Royal Society of Miniature Painters. The upper panels, Italian Renaissance and Byzantine mosaic together with the painted ceiling are also from his brush.

The design of the ceiling is adapted from the Book of Kells, a tenth century Irish manuscript, preserved in Trinity College, Dublin. In the spandrels are the Archangels, standing on crystal spheres, between the star of the Morning. Full-length figures

of the four Evangelists form a cross which is linked together by a rainbow circle, the familiar Celtic design. Within the rainbow is the sun in his splendor, while in the center of this celestial pageantry is the plain Cross of the Redeemer. The ceiling is worked out in imitation mosaic and took more than nine months to complete.

In the Chapel, there are three windows in translucent enamel, all executed by Kathleen Quigly. The center window portrays Alpha and Omega, with the symbolic pictures of the Evangelists: the young man, St. Matthew; the winged lion, St. Mark; the winged bull, St. Luke; and the eagle, St. John. The windows on either side have six instruments of the Passion. Above the inlaid door leading from the Hall of the Fairy Kiss is a polychrome ivory figure representing Tobias and the Angel, Portuguese work of the sixteenth century. Above it hangs a crucifix in early Limoges enamel, which once was a bishop's pectoral cross. In the center of the panel on the right there is an enamel and gold plaque of the Nativity. A panel on the left is a carved wood figure of the Madonna and Child. All the Renaissance panels are framed in tiny cockle-shells picked up on the shores of Brittany.

On the right wall of the oratory is a perfect copy of James Watt's famous Chamber Organ in Glasgow. Opposite the organ is a South German boxwood carving of the Holy Family which is mounted on a base inlaid with Roman porphyry plaques.

The first of the domestic apartments is Titania's boudoir. A tiny copy of Handel's Spinet from the Foundling Hospital is placed in one corner to furnish music for the Queen of the Fairies. In the center of the room is a table of ivory, painted with Indian scenes, mounted on a wooden base. Beside the door which leads through the secret panel to the Chapel, stands a three-fold screen made from Persian playing cards of the early seventeenth century, embellished with Chinese ivory carvings, and in front of the screen is an ivory spinning wheel, a miniature of the one used by Sleeping Beauty.

The floor of Titania's Boudoir was inlaid by Colonel Gillespie; the design was adapted by Sir Nevile from the ceiling in the Ducal Palace at Mantua. The design of the ceiling is based on the ceiling by Hans Holbein in the Chapel Royal of St. James' Palace. A series of needlework panels, made by Mrs. M. M.

Foster, enclosed in glass decorate the walls; the curtains were specially woven by an English textile guild. The curtain cornices contain some of Sir Nevile's remarkable collection of Wedgwood medallions from old rings.

The fire in the grate of the boudoir has a fender made of an Irish napkin ring; the hearth rug is of needlework. The main light in this room is furnished by a pendant lamp which was originally a rock crystal reliquary case. Many of the miniatures in the boudoir were made especially for exhibition in the Palace; the writing desk with intricate small locks that work, a bow fronted commode in satinwood and hairwood, two black lacquer chairs upholstered in tapestry and a tiny silver kettle on a stool which is inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl. Other fairyland touches in the boudoir are the Rose and the Tiger Lily that spoke to Alice when she arrived in the garden of Looking-glass-Land and the gold and jewelled stand which received the baby's first tear.

The most fanciful decoration in the bedroom occupied by Princess Iris and Princess Ruby is the gayly decorated cupboard used as a storehouse for spare wings. On the washstand are



*Titania's Palace, The Royal Dining Room.*

tooth brushes, bars of soap and sponges. Four of the pictures hanging in this bedroom were the gift of Queen Mary. This room is usually kept well furnished with miniature flowering Iris plants, sent as presents to their namesake by the Air Fairies, over whom she rules.

From the Boudoir, the main doorway leads to the Royal Dining-Room, a well furnished apartment with a large table bearing many varieties of miniature fruits. To understand the absence of knives and forks and baked meats on the table, it should be remembered that

The spirits of the air live on the smells of fruit, and Joy,  
with pinions light, roves round  
The gardens, or sits singing in the trees.

—William Blake.

The table top is of walnut veneer, obtained from the case of a clock made two centuries ago. The chairs which stand around it are Chippendale, made by the late Mr. Metge, their seats of Bargello, by Kathleen Kelsey. Below the first window stands one of the bronze jars into which Morgiana poured her fatal oil. The ship in which Sinbad the Sailor set off on his voyages decorates the center window, while below the window on the right is Pandora's famous box in fine Chinese lacquer.

The room itself is surrounded by gold canvas; above that there is a broad band of pale gray wall. On this band there are nine exquisite landscape paintings, chiefly snow scenes by Claes Molinaer who painted about the middle of the seventeenth century. The fire place is made of Connemara marble crowned by a bronze hood, on which is modeled St. George and the Dragon. The floor is inlaid with strips of satin walnut.

An ebony day bed of the Jacobean period stands before the fire. It was originally designed to carry some needlework by the late Duchess of Albany destined for a German exhibition. It now serves as a fitting frame for one of the most attractive pieces of drawn needlework by Mrs. M. M. Foster, who also made the needlework panels in Titania's Boudoir.

Two cases in the dining room contain some remarkable specimens, the most notable being a pair of silver equestrian figures probably made for a Royal Prince of France to commemorate the

victories of the Grand Conde. All of these features tend to give the Royal Dining Room an air of quiet dignity.

The day nursery is a treasure house of toys which have been given to the fairy Princesses by their admirers from all countries. In the corner is the ivory clock, made by Colonel Gillespie, and in front of it is the dolls' house belonging to the fairies themselves. This is a miniature copy of the house built by Sir Nevile Wilkinson in 1908 and opened by Queen Alexandra with the golden key now preserved in the entrance hall of Titania's Palace.

It was Sir Nevile's fanciful interpretation that fairies have the same difficulty in getting into their dolls' house as humans have in getting into Titania's Palace, but they overcome this by putting a pot of Alice's mushrooms in front of the entrance door, so that when they wish to go in they have only to nibble a little of the edge and they can become as diminutive as they please.

The pieces of furniture in the day nursery are mostly French of the Louis XIV period. The day nursery fender is made of three solid gold slave bangles, one fixed above the other. (Most of the fenders in other rooms are made from napkin rings). Toys from all parts of the world are littered about on the floor. Evidently fairies are no more tidy than human children.

Next to the bathroom is the bedroom of Princess Daphne and Princess Pearl. The principal feature in their room, as in that of Princess Iris and Princess Ruby, is the beautifully decorated cupboard in which their spare wings are kept, with a number of extra clean pairs of wings for Sunday wear.

The Morning Room, which is entered from the dining room through an elaborate doorway of Chinese ivory carved like lace-work, contains an admirable collection of miniature lacquer furniture. A bureau in the Queen Anne style stands against the wall, four of the upper drawers would stand on a postage stamp, yet each one is properly dovetailed and lined with cedarwood. All the furniture with the exception of a bookcase, which was made by Harry Hicks, is the joint work of Sir Nevile Wilkinson and Thomas Lennon, the former being responsible for the design and the decoration, while the latter did the woodwork.

An enamel globe of French manufacture dating back to the eighteenth century stands on a red lacquer cabinet under the

window. It contains a mariner's compass and sundial of almost incredible minuteness. This globe is supposed to have been used by Puck when he put a girdle around the earth in 40 seconds. Ornaments on the mantelpiece include a pair of carved tourmaline bird groups originally made for the Empress of China and purchased by Sir Nevile in San Francisco.

The two pictures on either side of the Chinese doorway, representing *The Calm* and *The Storm* are by the famous French painter, Horace Vernet, and the picture to the right of the doorway was painted by Samuel Palmer to illustrate *Gray's Elegy*.

Although there is no plumbing in fairyland, there is a Roman marble bathroom in Titania's Palace. Sir Nevile has explained that the bath is filled with dewdrops brought in rose leaves by attendant fairies. The ceiling of this room is the work of Sir Nevile and contains 250,000 separate dots of painted mosaic. The frieze represents an allegory of water, and a plaque made by Sir Nevile in imitation Dutch tiles stands behind the rock crystal in which the fairies dye their wings. This crystal dates back to the time of Queen Elizabeth and was originally a watch case. The base is inlaid with Queensland opals.

In "entering" Titania's Palace, the general public must use the Hall of the Guilds, but the inhabitants have a separate entrance. In this private hall are stored objects which attest to the human qualities of the fairies. Oberon, who has a mania for collecting, exhibits the overflow of objects from his own room in cases under the stairway. Almost all items are of silver, chairs, statuettes and so on. Prince Crystal's baby carriage stands at the left hand staircase. Although it is difficult to think of Titania as a sportswoman, her Hercules bicycle is also in the hall. A favorite Scotch game, curling, must interest some of the fairies for a pair of curling stones presented by Messrs. Hamilton and Inches of Edinburgh, Scotland, are under the center table. On the table top is a case containing the Visitors' Book, on the first page of which appears the signature of Queen Mary of England.

The first song in the English language to be set to music, the *Spring Song* written about 1350, is printed in raised gold letters on a frieze in Queen Titania's Bedchamber. This frieze, with its array of spring flowers, is the work of Mabel McConnell of Dublin. The elaborate ceiling is again the work of Sir Nevile. Divided into twenty-one compartments, it contains pictures of



classical fables in the style of Pinturicchio, reminiscent of a famous ceiling in the Metropolitan Museum of New York. Fine ivory carvings dating back to the time of Charles II were incorporated into the design of the four poster bed fashioned by Thomas Lennon and painted by Sir Neville. The coats-of-arms of Queen Titania and the Prince Consort Oberon decorate the canopy. Titania's toilet service and a yellow Sévres tea service matching the furniture were presented by Queen Mary.

Oberon's study contains many works of art. One which will be of particular interest to Americans is a pea-size engraved portrait of George Washington, found in the back of a small watch. There are three historical miniatures in the study; a bureau which is a genuine Louis XV piece, a Chippendale chair upholstered in soft brown leather and a Louis XV writing desk with a roll top. In an ivory casket near the corner cupboard are two pieces of wedding cake, one of Princess Mary's and the other of the Duchess of York's, now Queen Elizabeth of England. Oberon's favorite musical instrument, the cello, leans against chair in the foreground. A piece of music, the overture to *Oberon*, lies on the table beside it. One of the decorative objects in the room was found in a mummy case, discovered in a tomb close to that of Tutankhamen. It is an enameled horse of Greek-Egyptian origin, probably three thousand years old. Above the mantelpiece is a seventeenth century painting of a Spanish General on mother-of-pearl. And nearby is an ivory statuette of Gutenberg. The general color scheme of the ceiling is white and silver; the whole design took about four months of Sir Neville's spare time to complete. The floor was done by Colonel Gillespie and contains as a center a peacock, Oberon's chosen badge. In the dressing room, is an example of ivory turning, a perfect collar stud, so small that it is hardly visible. Oberon also possesses a razor, sent by the Sheffield Knife Makers to the Paris Exhibition as an example of their work in steel. Part of the Fairy Prince's collection is housed in a room known as Oberon's Museum. Here is fine glass, Bristol, Bohemian and Venetian. A Ming Temple Bell, pieces of Chinese porcelain and carved amber are in the Museum. In the background is a vase carved in solid topaz and a beadwork bed from time of Charles II. In the foreground with two Michael Mann caskets is a ship model, similar in characteristics to the model made at Norman Cross prison by a French prisoner and now in the Norworth collection. Made in 1790 by a French prisoner of war, it is a reproduction of the *Foudroyant*, French battleship of that period. The ship was given to Sir

Nevile by a man whose family had owned it since it was built. Mr. C. Hampshire of London, a member of the Institute of Marine Engineers, and himself a maker of fine ship models, said it was the most expert miniature ship model he had ever seen.

One of the doors in the Museum room is the family entrance to the Throne Room of the Palace. At the foot of the Throne dais standing on raised pedestals are two silver horses originally from one of the silver coaches in miniature which were not uncommon during the reign of Charles II. Three steps of mother-of-pearl lead to the throne seat which is protected by a glass canopy. The seat itself is of ebony with ivory and tortoise shell inlay. Over the throne a bronze fairy, poised on a crystal ball, holds the diadem of Fairyland. Ivory pillars on either side support two Renaissance figures in solid gold attributed to Benvenuto Cellini; the only other pair of similar figures were once part of the Pierpont Morgan collection. The back of the throne is formed by a peacock with its tail outspread, set with diamonds, rubies, emeralds and sapphires. It was originally made for the Paris exhibition of 1856 by Baugrand, Napoleon III's Court Jeweler. No other object in the Palace has had such an adventurous career. First, it is said that the peacock was given to Empress Eugénie. Years later, it was purchased by a Russian Prince. Following the Bolshevik Revolution, this Prince disposed of his precious jewels in Paris and among them was the peacock, back in the land of its origin once more. When Sir Nevile sent out inquiries to all the well known dealers of antiques in London and Paris, this artistic ornament was discovered and soon assumed its important role in the Throne Room.

In the midst of all this splendor, it seemed only fitting to have a mosaic floor and a ceiling of pearls. A four inch frieze which runs around the walls above the canopy and windows is one of the many examples of Sir Nevile's work in this room. The design was suggested to him by a visit to Ravenna and the Tomb of Galla Placidia. The workmanship is so minute that it took him a day to finish three-quarters of an inch. Against the end wall, next to the Hall of the Guilds, hangs a carved ivory frame of Renaissance work, supported by four antique pillars; a piece of early carved coral and a Capo di Monte vase are between the pillars. In the center is a silver sundial of the seventeenth century and on either side are reproductions of the horses which stand outside the Quirinal Palace at Rome; the

reproductions were made by a French craftsman at the time of Napoleon I.

In the foreground of the Throne Room are two carved tables with tops made of painted inlaid mosaic; on one is a solid gold bowl, inlaid with uncut diamonds, which came from the Royal Palace of Mandalay in 1886; on the other table is an ancient Grecian cameo cut into the side of an onyx base. On a circular table in the center is the crown of Fairyland set with real jewels.

Sir Nevile Wilkinson was a collector of miniature antiques and works of art from his boyhood. His intention originally was to make a museum of miniatures in his own house, but when his daughter asked if it were not possible to make a Fairy Queen's Palace, she gave him the idea of building a miniature Palace and furnishing it with objects from his own collection. No matter how accurate and lengthy descriptions may be, they fail to do justice to this collection. A lifetime of patience, fine artistic ability and the discrimination of an expert collector have built Titania's Palace.

Since his death, Miss H. M. Leslie and Miss F. A. Hills have been traveling with the Palace, showing it for the benefit of crippled children. Both women have been associated with this work for more than twelve years.

## Chapter XI

### *The Thorne Rooms*

Since 1933 the name of Mrs. James Ward Thorne has been made known through her Thorne Miniature Rooms to thousands of visitors who attended any one of the three last world fairs in the United States, the Century of Progress in Chicago during 1933 and 1934, the World's Fair of New York in 1939 and 1940, and the Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco in 1939 and 1940. Thorne Miniature Rooms have also been exhibited in the Chicago Historical Society and the Art Institute of Chicago within recent years. At both these institutions, the steady flow of visitors demonstrated what might be termed their almost "universal" appeal. Children, students, housewives, artists and collectors, persons of all ages and of every walk of life are attracted to these rooms. Children regard them as exquisite playthings, students and artists are aided in their studies of interior decoration, housewives look for the answer to difficult color or furniture problems and collectors mentally compare their own miniature possessions with the furniture and room ornaments displayed in the models.

Considered from a miniature collector's point of view, these model interiors are increasingly interesting since at the present time the European sources from which so many of the objects were purchased no longer exist. The original European museum pieces, which were copied in miniature for some of the earlier rooms, may already have been damaged or will not survive air raids. The cabinetmakers who fashioned the copies no longer have the leisure for miniature work. Their skill is being utilized by their government in airplane and munition factories or on one of the many war fronts. Until the war is ended, the small chairs, commodes, credences, tables and other furnishings used in the Thorne Rooms will represent the last examples of handicraft executed by these craftsmen during peace times.

Mrs. Thorne became acquainted with European antique dealers during frequent trips abroad with her parents. Early in her life she came to know the thoroughfares of London, Rome, Paris and Berlin as well as most children know the main streets of their



*French Louis XVI Dining Room, Thorne Rooms.*

home towns. Between her visits, the shop owners in these cities, remembering her interest, saved choice miniatures for her. Many pieces in her growing collection were kept in her room, housed in special cabinets. But the majority of them were placed in dolls' houses built for her young friends or for the wards in children's hospitals. As her knowledge of collecting increased, the furnishings of the dolls' houses became more elaborate. After her marriage to James Ward Thorne, the nephew of Montgomery Ward, the former Narcissa Niblack, continued her hobby and conceived the idea which has since developed into three series of Thorne Miniature Rooms, ninety-seven in all, interpreting the great decorative styles of the past.

The Venetian Room depicting the Italian Renaissance style is what Mrs. Thorne calls the beginning of her miniature rooms. While she and her husband were in Rome during the early 1920's, she discovered six pieces which were destined to be the nucleus of this first interior. They had belonged to an Italian noblewoman, in whose family they had been prized possessions for many years. These six pieces were a pair of bronze chandeliers, set with semi-precious stones, two bronze console tables and two polychrome busts. It seemed a pity to place these objects in a dolls' house and have them go the way of all toys so she endeavored to recreate a suitable background, a salon patterned after the style in vogue during the renaissance.

On their journey through Italy, Mrs. Thorne and her husband found that word of their coming had preceded them: peddlers, collectors or dealers waited at hotels and inns to sell them small objects, so that when they left Italy for Paris, they had a trunk filled with miniatures—silver wall sconces, inch high wine bottles in braided straw, Venetian glass candlesticks, a credenza and a variety of other objects. With a definite idea in mind as to how her purchases would be used, Mrs. Thorne spent all her time searching for more miniatures. In Paris, left bank shops were visited and unusual objects discovered: old silver dinner sets, diminutive toilet articles, silver and porcelain vases and clocks—all in the scale of one inch to the foot. She discovered many pieces of beautiful furniture, among them a Louis XVI desk with a marble top, several commodes and consoles decorated with inlaid wood, antique hardware and locks operated by tiny keys, all in the same scale—one inch to the foot. Of all her trips abroad, this one is recalled as the most delightful. It marked the beginning

of a new development in a hobby which was to fill her leisure hours for more than twenty years.

After her return to Chicago from this memorable excursion, Mrs. Thorne began planning her first room, the Venetian Salon. Hours of research were necessary before craftsmen began to manufacture harmonizing furnishings. A suitable background in size and color had to be determined; it was decided to use grey-blue plaster walls, a gilded coffered ceiling and window hangings of gold faille. The finished room is a fine adaptation of a Renaissance interior. As in the case of actual furnishings of this period, the miniatures in the Salon are architectural not only in form but in detail. For example, the front of the credenza resembles the facades of a great palace of the time with portals, columns and pilasters in close adaptation of the classical orders. The large furniture was placed along the walls, while there was little in the center of the room.

The instinctive good taste of the Florentines made their fine large rooms appear even more grandiose by using their method of furniture placement. The Venetians, on the other hand, expended vast fortunes in overloading their palaces with ostentatious and costly furniture. The only two objects in the center of Mrs. Thorne's so-called Venetian Salon are a Dantesca chair and a reading stand. The Dantesca chair is similar to the Savonarola chair, both of which are adaptations of the Roman curule seat, sometimes called x-shaped chairs. This style was the Renaissance version of the folding chair, constructed so that it could be folded and easily stowed out of sight.

One object in this Salon which brings forth as much comment as the two chandeliers is a curious portrait, made entirely of wax, which hangs between the windows. The face and neck are made with tiny beads set in the wax, while the Medici collar consists of seed pearls and the bodice of emerald dust set with rubies.

As soon as this first room was completed, Mrs. Thorne proceeded to have suitable backgrounds made for other miniatures which she had collected. During the years preceding the opening of the Century of Progress in Chicago, twelve rooms were assembled: the Venetian Salon, an Early American Kitchen, a French Bedroom and a French Dining Room of the Louis XVI period, a French Empire Salon, an Early English Library, a Mid-Victorian

Library, an Italian Dining Hall, a Spanish Baroque Bedroom, a Spanish Vaulted Hall, a French Breton Kitchen and a Majorcan Kitchen.

While these twelve rooms were on exhibition at the Fair, Mrs Thorne's craftsmen were busy, finishing fifteen additional rooms which were added to the original twelve. All twenty-seven rooms were exhibited as a unit at the Chicago Historical Society following the close of the Century of Progress in 1934.

As a member of the staff of this museum, the present writer had an opportunity to notice the public's ever-increasing interest in these rooms. Many notables, while in Chicago, visited the gallery. Occasionally architects brought their clients to the exhibit, using the interiors to illustrate particular types of decoration. One visitor who seemed "to see" what the originator of these rooms was trying to do was Miss Helen Keller. The glass windows were unlocked and some of the objects were placed in Miss Keller's hands. As her sensitive fingers traced the delicate outlines of the pieces, Miss Keller indicated to her companion that she believed Mrs. Thorne was perpetuating in miniature the best in each decorative period.

Six kitchens are included in this first set; an Early American, a Summer Kitchen, French Breton, Majorcan, English Cotswold Cottage and English Lodge Kitchen. In recent years, as Americans have spent less of their time in the kitchen, it is interesting to recall that women visitors who expressed their admiration for these kitchen models invariably phrased their compliments in a nostalgic manner. This feeling was most noticeable in the case of the American Summer Kitchen which seemed to revive childhood memories of carefree vacation days spent on a farm where the activity of the household usually centered around the sunny kitchen.

Like almost all the other rooms of this first set, the Summer Kitchen was built around one object, a miniature stove from Cape Cod sent to Mrs. Thorne by her son. From her collection she selected the pots, kettles, buckets and porcelain ware for the room. In London, she had found miniature editions of the *Chicago Daily Tribune* and the notorious pink covered *Police Gazette* which are now neatly tucked in a beaded newspaper rack on the wall. Next to the sink hangs a copy of a Montgomery Ward & Company



catalog, made by one of the men who engraved early Ward catalogs. The wash stand, shaving cup and ever soiled roller towel, with the brush and comb hanging on a chain, are reminiscent of the days when the hired men and the farm boys washed and brushed wet hair before they sat down to an old-fashioned harvest meal. On the much scrubbed floor stands a table where pie dough (rubber bandage material) is being rolled out. The doughnuts, in a jar on the table, are rubber tires from ten cent store toy automobiles, sprinkled with soda instead of sugar, as the sugar granules would be out of scale.

As in all Thorne rooms, the light in the kitchen comes from outside the room, through the window and through the screen door, beyond which one catches a glimpse of the warden and the old iron pump. No interior lighting is used in any of the rooms; all light comes through the doors or windows. By using different color electric light bulbs to harmonize with the exterior scene, it has been possible to simulate bright sunshine (as in the case of the American Summer Kitchen), or the soft light of an autumn sunset, the cold rays of the sun on a wintry day, the blue haze of dusk and so on. This technique of lighting has been used in all ninety-seven rooms and is responsible in no small measure for creating a natural atmosphere.

The immediate surroundings are in keeping with the interior. Thus, outside the window of the Breton kitchen there is a fishnet hung to dry and in the distance one sees a broad expanse of greenish gray water, the Atlantic Ocean, from which these fisher folk eke out their existence. Through the floor length window of the Penthouse Dining Room flashes the beacon on the Palmolive Building and the lights of Chicago skyscrapers. The windows of the English Georgian Library, the model room copied for Queen Mary of England, look out upon the streets of old London.

The use of genuine materials has also been the rule wherever possible. Lamps, grilles and screens in the Spanish and Italian rooms are of iron; the furniture is of wood (not a painted substitute) carved in the finest detail and covered with genuine tapestries, the floors are of small tiles and wood and the rugs and bell pulls are of real petit point and tapestry.

The Louis XVI Dining Room was reconstructed around a tapestry. Mrs. Thorne relates that in a secret drawer of an old

French desk, she found an original water color cartoon of this old tapestry together with swatches of many colored wools. To house the lovely painting properly, a Louis XVI dining room from one of the well known chateau Fontainebleau was chosen as a model, the color scheme of the room, pale green walls and rose curtains, blending with the soft tones of the water color. The border of the cartoon is decorated with ribbon and bow shares, one of the several characteristics usually found in authentic tapestries and furnishings of the Louis XVI period. All accessories in the room were purchased in Paris. The furniture, copied from antique French pieces, is also decorated with ribbon and bow shares and displays another Louis XVI detail, the square ornament above each chair leg. As a whole, the room represents the charming style of Louis XVI, uninspired and coldly classical when compared with the artistic debauch of the Louis XV period.

Louis XV was only five years old when his great-grandfather, Louis XIV died. Until the boy's majority the country was in the hands of his grand uncle, the Duke of Orleans. The Regent set out to promote gaiety in court circles, whereas in the last years of Louis XIV's reign there had been nothing but dignity and respectability. During the Regency, furniture gradually acquired the exaggerated curvilinear contours which in the second half of the eighteenth century became identified as the Louis XV style proper. Changes in furnishings from 1769 onward were due to a greater extent than is generally known to the last of Louis XVth's favorites, the lovely milliner's apprentice, Jeanne Bécu, who became notorious under the name of Countess du Barry. In 1769 Louis presented her with a fine old Chateau de Louveciennes, which she furnished with a restraint and good taste contrasting strangely with the extravagances in conduct and expenditure which made her name abhorred throughout the length and breadth of France. The Louis XV Salon selected by Mrs. Thorne is typical of this later, more delicate, style influenced by Mme. du Barry. The couch and chairs in the miniature room are covered with needlepoint from old handbags purchased in Vienna. The centers of two rugs in the Salon come from flat needlepoint card cases. Harmonizing borders were added to enlarge each rug to bring it to scale. The panelled walls are carved by hand and the wood is grained in scale. More than two hundred leather bound books decorated with hand tooling are placed on recessed book shelves. The parquetté floor (reproduced in this Salon) was very popular in France at the end of the 18th century in the last years of the reign of Louis XV and throughout that of his successor, Louis XVI.

In each of the Louis XV and Louis XIV rooms are miniature Chinese porcelains used as decorative pieces on consoles and mantels. These Oriental art objects are historically correct and belong in an interior of the period. A predecessor of Mme. du Barry, another of Louis XVth's favorites, Mme. de Pompadour, was responsible for this vogue. She loved Chinese art in porcelain and procured for her country many of the finest pieces in existence. She also induced the king to purchase a third share in the Sèvres factory, contributing both to the excellence of the wares and to their reputation at home and abroad. A tea set of old Sèvres, made from a pattern approved by Mme. de Pompadour, is placed on a low table in the Louis XIV drawing room.

In each of the three sets of architectural models, there is included at least one room of the Victorian period; in this first set, it is a Parlor, less pretentious or perfect than the other models, but nonetheless charming. The furniture came from an English dolls' house of the late 1800's and consequently does not have the usual finish of made-to-order furniture. Typical Victorian objects from the British Isles decorated the room; two Rogers groups from Scotland, a Rockingham lamb, a Le Blond print of Balmoral Castle and a copy of *The London Times* newspaper struck off for the Queen's Dolls' House.

Individual objects in other interiors are also of interest to the collector. In the Modern Library, the telephone is a platinum bracelet charm. A bust on the mantelpiece of the Louis XVI Dining Room is a bronze letter seal. It has been painted a soft brown to suggest a terra cotta by the French sculptor, Houdon. The quill pen in Marie Antoinette's bedroom was originally a feather from a canary bird's tail. Through the grille door of the Spanish Hall, what seems to be a fountain playing is actually a bronze clock-like device which revolves a twisted stick of crystal, simulating the flow of water. The back of the bed in the Spanish Bedroom is the top of a gold Spanish comb, encrusted with coral, mother-of-pearl and ivory. Two miniature paintings on the walls of this bedroom were once a gentleman's cuff links. A corner of Mrs. Thorne's grandmother's paisley shawl is now a rug in the Georgian Drawing Room.

It is the desire of many collectors to possess several good miniatures which are authentic "salesman's samples," the miniature models used before the days of photography and modern transportation by cabinetmakers who traveled about the countries of

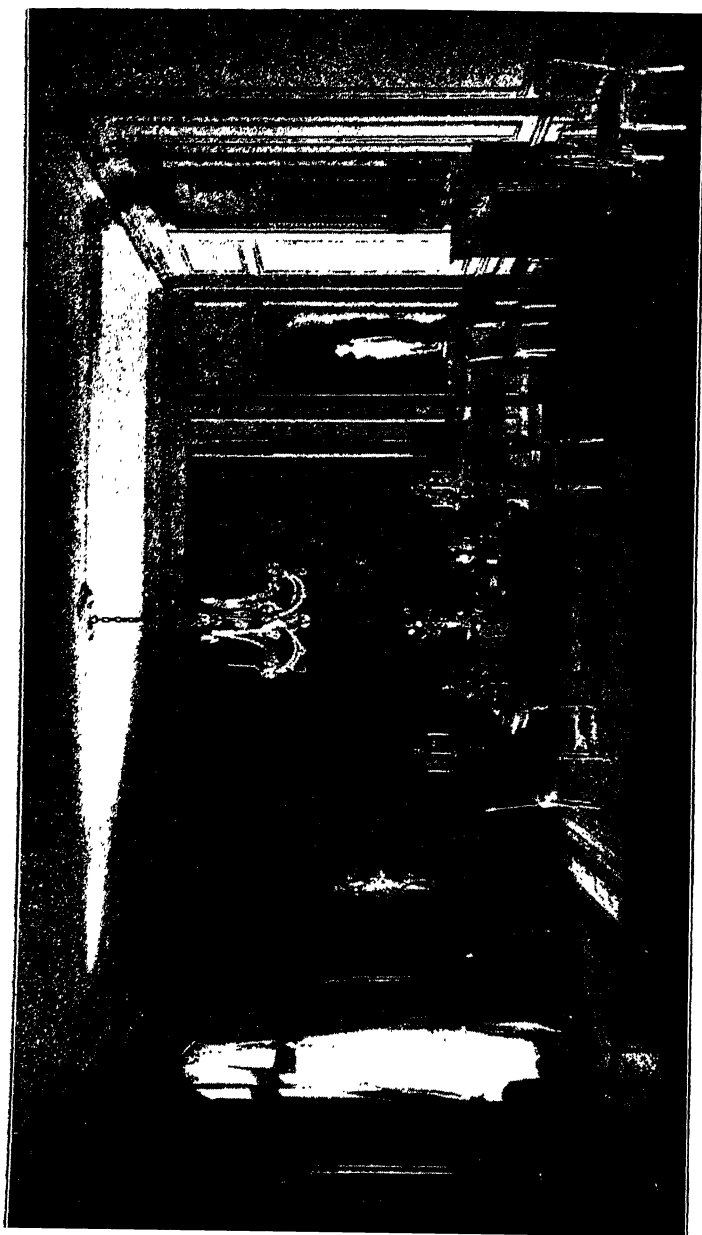
Europe visiting the homes of the great and carrying small scale samples of their furniture designs. These tiny replicas exhibited their craftsmanship and skill and from these models were orders procured for full-sized pieces. Genuine "traveler's" or "salesmen's" samples have become so rare that, before the war, when they were auctioned in Europe, they brought high prices. Four salesman's samples are exhibited in the first series, the Venetian chandeliers (mentioned early in this chapter), and a parquetted desk and commode in the Louis XVI Bedroom.

When the Thorne Miniature Rooms were removed from the Chicago Historical Society for exhibition at the Golden Gate International Exposition at San Francisco in 1940, two Oriental rooms were added (making a total of twenty-nine rooms in all) a typical Japanese interior and a Living Apartment in a Chinese Palace.

The Japanese Interior represents the main room of a Japanese home, with a glimpse of an adjoining room which is usually used by the mistress of the house. Beyond the light wood frame and paper partitions is a view of the garden. Between these two rooms is a vitrine, containing some of the equipment used in the social functions peculiar to Japan, equipment for the ritual of serving powdered tea and sake.

The Living Apartment in a Chinese Palace illustrates that Chinese houses are a combination of a residence and a place of worship. Divided into three parts, the upper, central and lower halls symbolize Heaven, Earth and Humanity. Ancestral worship, New Year's celebrations, wedding and funeral rites are conducted in the most sacred part of the house, the upper hall or Shang T'ang; an ancestral portrait is hung in the center wall of this upper hall, sometimes an elaborate tablet is built within the wall and a set of urns are always displayed in front of the portrait. Family treasures are stored in the two chests standing on either side of the central hall or Chung T'ang, which is a little narrower than the other two halls. The lower hall or Hsia T'ang is the living quarters. It is also divided into three portions, one room on either side and an open court in the center which provides sufficient light and air for the rooms. Favorite flowers and artistic plants are placed in this lower hall for the enjoyment of the master and mistress who occupy the suite.

Mrs. Thorne's interest in the rooms of the first series which have just been described did not prevent her from seeing, almost



*English Georgian Library. Thorne Rooms.*

as soon as they were complete, the numerous technical imperfections. Her second series, numbering thirty rooms, are all of English and French styles, with three exceptions: the Baroque hallway of a German Palace, a Biedermeier sitting room and the Gothic cathedral, "Our Lady of the Angels."

The Baroque hallway is a reproduction of Schloss Marquardsburg, built in 1750 at Seehof, near Bamberg. It is a representation of the florid style of ornamentation which swept over Europe in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The fad originated in Italy, created by Borromini and Bernini, and spread all over Europe, like a plague of bad taste acquiring unaccountable popularity everywhere, but particularly in Germany. The style owed much to oriental influence on the western world, as a result of trading relations with India and the Far East. At its best, the Baroque style is informal. At its worst, it is bombastic to the point of grotesqueness. The hallway from this little known castle was selected as an example of the Baroque in its least objectionable form.

Unlike any other style of furnishings, Biedermeier was not named after a political or royal leader, a cabinetmaker, an historical period, or any location. Biedermeier was an imaginary character created by a poet who wrote for a satirical German periodical. Into the mouth of Papa Biedermeier, his creator put the opinions and point of view of the common people. The period covering the years 1815-1850 was known in Germany as the Biedermeierzeit. It was a comfortable style with furniture luxuriously cushioned and padded. Thick curtains partly covered by festooned draperies, elaborate tablecovers and antimacassars were all used. Tassels and fringe were everywhere. But this Biedermeier sitting room in the second series of Thorne Miniatures is not sufficiently overcrowded with furniture, pictures and knick-knacks to represent accurately the exuberant taste of this style.

The church in this second series was not made in the Thorne workshop. According to the catalog it was constructed by Lawrence Brown of the Francis Kramer studios in Chicago. (See the chapter on Dolls' houses for Mr. Kramer's explanation of how much work was done by him and his craftsmen in the construction of the shells, gardens, and furnishings.) A New York architect who has specialized in Gothic architecture, Elliott L. Chisling, made the designs. Paintings and polychroming were made by Hildreth

Meiere, mural painter; wrought-iron work, lighting fixtures and altar ornaments by Marie Zimmerman; and the stained glass windows by G. Owen Bonawit. The carvings and paintings are the work of two Chicago artists, Alfons Weber and A. W. Pedersen. The model, at three-quarters of an inch to the foot, gives the sanctuary and first bay of a Roman Catholic Church designed in the twelfth century Gothic style before it became flamboyant and decadent. The carving of the woodwork is based on the furniture found in English churches and cathedrals of the fifteenth century. When this model was first displayed at the Art Institute, it was located in a separate portion of the gallery, apart from the other models and wired for continuous organ music.

The first of the English rooms in this second series is the Tudor Great Hall, notable for its fine carvings, particularly a massive Renaissance screen (peculiar to Tudor architecture) copied from Wadham College, Oxford. The Tudor Style held in England approximately the same position as did the Louis XIII style in France. Both were transitional; the latter was the link between the Franco-Flemish Renaissance and the "grand style" of Louis XIV, the Tudor Style connected Gothic to Elizabethan (English Renaissance). Although Queen Elizabeth was a Tudor, the Elizabethan style stood apart from what is generally known as the Tudor to such an extent that they were in reality two separate modes.

In the sixteenth century, when noblemen's mansions began to pass from fortified castles to social halls, because self defense was no longer of first importance, permanent furnishings were constructed to give greater physical comfort and present a more pleasing appearance. Carved screens and wainscoted walls were two methods of decoration used during the Tudor period. Wainscoting was introduced some time during or shortly before the reign of Henry VIII; in the days of Elizabeth, it was the accepted treatment for walls. Above the panelling, the walls were usually painted with scenes of falconry, tournaments, or battles, until tapestries became fashionable. Mrs. Thorne's model exhibits portraits above the panels on a wall of solid color. In the center of the miniature room is a long narrow table standing on six legs decorated with enormous cup and cover bulbs, a typical Elizabethan decoration. Upon this table were served all meals, henchmen used a nearby bench and the nobles sat on the stiff high-back chairs. The place of honor was the wainscot chair, a secular object which

replaced the Gothic chayère. The Thorne version of the wainscot chair, using the type of cresting, sloping arms and raised stretcher as indications of date, seems to belong to the James I period rather than the Elizabethan period. A second high-back wooden chair in this model carries a definitely Gothic motive, the so-called "linen-fold" decoration. This type of carving was symbolic, representing the muslin cloth placed over the chalice of the Eucharist. The two upholstered chairs are of the Cromwell type, a style which was borrowed from the partly Spanish, partly Italian form of a Louis XIII period chair favored by his wife, Anne of Austria, who was a Spanish Hapsburg. Two suits of armor in this hall, of the type worn by the warriors of Henry VIII, were made in the Kramer workshop.

Following the Elizabethan period, the Jacobean lasted for eighty-five years and covered five reigns. Naturally, a variety of designs developed during this long period of time. Examples of several of the styles developed during these reigns are to be found in the Thorne Jacobean bedroom, modelled after a chamber of Knole House. The miniature cupboard in this room has been incorrectly labeled a court cupboard when it is in reality a press cupboard. Both types are typical of the Elizabethan and Jacobean period, and both are two-body pieces, but the court cupboard has only the upper portion made into small cupboards while the lower portion is open. The word *court* is not used as an indication that it is reproduced from a palace piece, but is simply the French word for short, the cupboard did not go all the way down.

Two types of furniture, still in use today, made their appearance during the Jacobean period, the gate-leg table and the day bed. Miniatures of both these innovations are included in the room. The day bed became fashionable in the reign of Charles II and was usually constructed with long caned seats. The Thorne version does not possess any caning; it is upholstered and has a canted back with spiral-turned spindles. The carpet in the model is Elizabethan in pattern. Although this carpet is shown on the floor, in the early 17th century, carpets were used as tablecloths. It was not yet customary to spread them on the floor; the habits of domestic life of those days would have ruined them too quickly.

Copied from Belton House in England, originally designed by Sir Christopher Wren, the William and Mary room exhibits a rug having an unusual history. During one of her visits to an antique



shop in Paris, Mrs. Thorne noticed a small square of tapestry used as a doily under a kerosene lamp. Soiled and darkened with oil, the design was nearly obscured. After a thorough cleaning, it turned out to be a reproduction of an oriental rug suitable for the William and Mary period. Two of the distinguishing features of William and Mary furniture, the inverted cup leg and the double hood, are used on the chair legs and the secretary and settee, respectively. These characteristics are French rather than Dutch as attributed in the Thorne catalog. Daniel Marot, exiled Huguenot and once leading cabinetmaker for the luxurious court of Louis XIV, was brought to England by William of Orange and introduced these features to the English in his capacity as cabinet-maker for William and Mary. Even the highboy, which made its appearance during the reign of the Usurper, owed part of its name to the French language; the boy of highboy comes from the French word *bois* (wood) which has been employed for centuries in the sense of furniture. The highboy is marquetté, a style of decoration, typical of the period, brought to England from Holland before the Prince of Orange ascended the English throne.

The room which follows in the chronological series is the Queen Anne Cottage, depicting the period 1702 to 1714 and described as being similar in character to the one in Anne Hathaway's home near Stratford-on-Avon. The most interesting object in the cottage to a collector may be the oak dresser laden with small ornaments, copied to order from original large pieces, for it seemed impossible to find antique miniature bits of this period. The single chairs are the English Windsor type with cabriole legs, while the fireside seat back is decorated with parchment-fold carving. A minimum of decoration was used during this period in English history as Queen Anne was a woman of very simple tastes and favored the plainest Dutch type of furniture. The courtiers and nobles copied the style used at court and once again simplicity became the mode. The furnishings in the Queen Anne period Library belong to the *decorated* Queen Anne rather than to the original simpler Dutch style. The Thorne miniature chairs, settees and consoles show a characteristic never found in true Queen Anne pieces: the ball and claw feet, which did not come into use in England until 1715. This decoration is a modification of a Buddhist motif common in Chinese art, the dragon claw holding the sphere of eternity.

Many of the miniatures in this series were found in Paris: the gold plate and enamels on the credence in the Louis XII Baronial

Hall, the gold service in the Louis XIV Salon, the gold coffee set in the French Regency Library, a fine piece of petit point on a wall of the Louis XV Boudoir, and the antique commode and secretary in the Marie Antoinette Salon. A few objects were found in Vienna and London: the needlepoint picture and tapestry in the Jacobean Bedroom and the petit point tapestries in the Louis XII Baronial Hall were from Vienna; the silver pieces in the Jacobean Bedroom and Chinese Chippendale Bedroom were purchased in London.

Several of the interiors are copies of museum exhibits. The walls, door and cupboards of the Early Georgian Period Living Room were copied from a room by Gibbs in the Kensington Museum of London. Historically, the Early Georgian period in furniture may be placed as being between 1714, the year of the accession of the Hanoverian, George I, to the throne of England, and 1749, when the younger Chippendale withdrew from his father's workshop, and set up in business for himself in Conduit street. The period has been divided into four sub-styles, some of which are represented in miniature furniture, the *Lion* style and the Chippendale type of chair. Lacquer work, both black and red with gold, was immensely popular during the period. Illustrating the *Chinese taste* of the English of the Early Georgian Period are a Coromandel screen, a perfect replica of one of these antiques, and two open cabinets of Chinese simulated porcelains and real jades. The porcelains are ivory, painted; the jades were imported from China.

The great Chippendale was obliged to bow to the fad for the Oriental style while it lasted, although he was merely catering to the wishes of his wealthy patrons rather than expressing his own taste, when he designed what is known as Chinese Chippendale. In the Victoria and Albert Museum an appropriate setting for this type of furnishing was installed many years ago. This room was used as the pattern for the bedroom reproduced in the second series. The famous English craftsman's original designs in his book *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director* were used for the gold mirror and candle brackets in the model interior. The four poster bed with its richly carved tester was a fashion brought back again from the 16th century by him. Not only did he resurrect styles but he also originated several articles such as wine-coolers, fire-screens and sideboards.

Famous houses are also represented in this second series; the

marble hall of a house built by Sir John Soane, architect, the bedroom from the Chateau of Azay-le-Rideau and the dining room from the Home House, designed by Robert Adams. The latter room is considered a fine example of a smaller London residence by Adams, the architect who not only designed houses but also designed the rugs, silver, furniture and the window draperies to go in them. Most of the objects in this model were made by modern craftsmen using Adam's own designs.

Among the French rooms in the second series, the earliest is the Louis XII Baronial Hall, inspired by rooms in the Chateau of Chaumont and Langeais. The Gothic chair with one large canopy was copied from a specimen in a French museum. Chairs numbered rarely more than two or three in the most powerful nobles' castles, one for the master, another for his wife and possibly a third for some highly-honored guest. In some castles a double or triple chair, as depicted in the model, took the place of single chairs. The scarcity of chairs in those days has been ignored in this version of a late fifteenth century interior; there are more than six other miniature seats placed in this hall and adjoining room. On the credence are the gold plate and enamels found in Paris. The credence was among the four types of furniture in wealthy nobles' castles, including chests, chairs and the dresser. It was originally an ecclesiastical object in which were locked the vessels required for the celebration of Mass.

The Francis I bedroom represents the effect of the Italian Renaissance on French art. Charles VIII of France had invaded Italy in 1494 and took possession of the city of Florence. When he returned to France, he carried with him numerous examples of Renaissance furniture and also led away in his train many artists and artisans who were to lay the foundations of the French Renaissance style. The great period of this style was the reign of Francis I, 1515-1547. The walls of the model room are painted to give the appearance of decorated leather which became very popular during this reign. Two wardrobes and a high-back carved chair are copied from examples in the Cluny Museum. Other pieces, bed tables, chairs, credence and mirror are reproductions of furniture in different chateaux belonging to Francis I. The Salamander, symbol of this French king, is used on several pieces. The worn tooled leather on a chair beside an embroidery frame came from the back of an old book and creates the impression of age.

A century after the end of the reign of Francis I, another great French king, Louis XIV, was on the throne. To symbolize the grandeur of his court, a salon designed by Le Pautre, noted architect of his reign, was reproduced. The chairs and table of this salon all carry diagonal, or x-shaped stretchers which is a Louis XIV characteristic. Two commodes are patterned after the work of Charles Boulle who was one of the two most important cabinet-makers of the period, the other being Daniel Marot, later cabinet-maker for William and Mary of England. It was during this period that such men as Boulle and Marot became known as *ébénistes* as a result of working with ebony. Since that time the French word for cabinet-maker has been *ébéniste*. Another word developed as a result of two of the most distinctive motives of the Louis XIV style, *rocaille* and *coquille* (*rockery* and *shell*) which were combined to form the term *rococo*. During the French Regency and the reign of Louis XV, the *ébénisterie* broke out in such a flurry of bad taste, misusing these motives, that even today *rococo* is used to express anything showy or in bad taste.

Between the Louis XIV Salon and the models of the Directoire and Empire styles are six French rooms containing many fine and interesting miniatures; a side of a rare old purse which serves as a tapestry over the sideboard of the Louis XIV Dining Room, the needlepoint from the top of a powder box and handbag from Paris which now serve as rugs in the Normandy Manor Bedroom, a bronze bust of Voltaire, once used as a seal, now on the mantel of the French Regency Library and the antique commode and secretary in the Marie Antoinette Salon.

In 1748, when excavations were begun at Pompeii, artists of the Directoire based their plans of the so-called Directoire style upon the designs of rooms and the mural paintings discovered by the workers. At the beginning of the Directoire style, a vogue arose for draping interiors into a resemblance of a tent, looping folds of material over the heads of beds, from the ceilings and covering the walls. Two stiff rolled pillows were used at either end of divans or beds, inspired by the rolls of bankets used inside tents. The Directoire model reproduced in the Thorne series shows a bathroom with a sunken tub and a glimpse of a bedroom through the center arch.

The Empire ante-room in the series is typical of this heavy and clumsy style, ebony furniture laden with gilt ormolu, Egyptian

and Pompeian symbols. A statue of Narcissus placed in a niche in this room came from Pompeii; the small bust of Napoleon in the center of the mantel was found in Paris.

Two modern rooms, English and French, are included. The English Modern is a representative of the English architect's adaptation of the Baroque style. Planned to reflect the taste admired by the former Edward VIII, now Duke of Windsor, the room is dominated by a portrait showing Edward in his royal blue robes, the keynote of the color scheme. At the opposite end of this room facing the portrait is a miniature bust resembling Wallis Warfield, now Duchess of Windsor. The French Modern Room illustrates the use of ornate Chinese decoration. Flanking the fireplace are two modern petit point tapestries representing the new type of designs done by a famous school of needlework in Vienna before 1939. In the distance, through the open window is the faint outline of the Eiffel Tower.

With one or two exceptions, the first sixty rooms represented mainly European and Oriental decorative styles. An American series was needed. Accordingly, plans were made to produce miniature rooms illustrating the various chronological and regional types of American interior design from the seventeenth century to the present day. A visitor to Mrs. Thorne's studio during 1939 and 1940 would have found her with a group of craftsmen any time between nine and five, determining the most effective and correct placement of the furnishings, or carefully checking over full-size drawings, three inches high, of a Philadelphia Chippendale chair, John Goddard secretary or Duncan Phyfe table.

In December of 1940, culminating fifteen years of interest in models, the American Rooms were placed on public exhibition at the Art Institute. Mrs. Thorne later transferred to this Institution the full ownership of all three series of rooms, consisting of ninety-seven units. This educational instrument is to be used without any limiting condition for the benefit of the work of the Art Institute, as its officers see fit. The proceeds from all showings throughout the United States are establishing a fund which is being used for the maintenance of the gift and the furtherance of activities in connection with it.

There are thirty-seven rooms in all in this latest set, constituting a survey of American architecture from the seventeenth

century to the present day. The collection is divided into three groups. In the first group are rooms illustrating the developments which took place in the North Atlantic region from the settlements on Massachusetts Bay to the days of the *brownstone front*; the second group, the more spacious attainments of the Old Dominion and her neighbors to the south; and in the third group, the nineteenth century types of the Middle West, the antebellum deep South, the Southwest, and California with her Spanish traditions and latest cosmopolitanism. Twenty-four are exact reproductions of famous interiors on the Atlantic seaboard, through the South and in the West. Several are replicas of famous rooms in museums and historical houses in the United States. The remainder are reconstructions with elements taken from the best known examples of interiors of the time.

The first room is a New England kitchen of the late sixteen hundreds. Two of the chairs are copied from examples traditionally belonging to Elder Brewster and Governor Carver. The miniature Carver chair is copied so closely from the so-called "Carver" seats in the Metropolitan Museum of Art that only by close observation is it possible to notice that the workman on the small model omitted some of the turning on the uprights, raised the seat rail, and changed the placement of the side stretchers. Near the Carver chair is a trestle table, copied from English lines. Next to the fireplace is a settle, a bench with a high back extending to the floor to keep drafts from the neck and feet. The settle was not a New England innovation, for this type of seat dates back to the Gothic period. Paint was not used on furniture or woodwork in the early colonies, hence the only color in this model room comes from the red brick fireplace, rag rugs and a canopy over the bed seen through a doorway. Inventories of well-to-do seventeenth century houses reveal that they contained much in the way of hangings, including tapestries, and needlework as well as treasures of plate made by American silversmiths and pewterers. This model depicts the home of an average New Englander so no hangings or rich tapestries are in evidence. A pine dresser shows a large supply of pewter plates, dishes, mugs, jugs and porringers. The Early American Kitchen, the first room in the initial series, is similar but its furnishings are designated by Mrs. Thorne as being typical of a later period, 1690 to 1750.

The low ceiling of the reproduction of the Samuel Wentworth House in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, is copied from the orig-

inal room which was planned for the northern shores where winters are long and intensely cold. In this room, even time is measured on a miniature scale. Sand in the small hourglass on the mantel takes only nine and a half seconds to run through. The miniature mistress of this house left her knitting on the center table—knitting worked on celluloid needles the size of straight pins. The ideal of the housewrights and cabinet makers who built the original Wentworth house and furnishings was to reproduce Old World characteristics. The early settlers undoubtedly suffered that dread spirit of homesickness and it was unquestionably that nostalgia which imprinted upon early American interiors and furnishings much of its English or Dutch aspect. All the furniture in this room comes under the designation of *memory* furniture, the day-bed, court cupboard, wainscot and Cromwellian chairs. Craftsmen transplanted from their homes, endeavored to create furnishings identical to those which they fashioned in their native lands. With no patterns or objects as guides, the workmanship on the original *memory* furniture is sometimes faulty, more crude, and has a definite native flavor. Three pieces in the Wentworth interior, typical of the Restoration period in England after 1660, are the stool, side chair and day bed, all of which have either caned seats or backs. The caned stool was sent through the mail to Mrs. Thorne by a craftsman who wished to present her with that example of his work. She purchased the stool and commissioned him to make the day bed and chair to match. All candles, those on the mantel, candlestand and in the chandelier were made by the tedious process of dipping thread in wax. Throughout early Colonial times, styles originating in Europe did not become the fashion until at least twenty-five years after their vogue three thousand miles away. This accounts for the use of furnishings, popular after 1660, in the Wentworth interior which is shown as it appeared in 1710.

The dining room copied from the Turner-Ingersoll House of Salem, Massachusetts is famous not only as an example of an early New England interior but also as the scene for Nathaniel Hawthorne's famous romance, *The House of Seven Gables*. In early New England models, as in this Turner-Ingersoll dining room, there is the ever present contrast of English and Oriental furnishings; the English luxuries were traded with the mother country for raw materials and the Oriental rugs and decorations were brought to New England in the East Indian trade.

Both English and American types of Windsor chairs are shown in the model of the Connecticut Valley Tavern; the chair with the cabriole legs is English, such legs for American Windsors were never made. The American Windsor has a high comb back and is sometimes referred to as the writing arm Windsor. It is said that Thomas Jefferson sat in such a chair to draft the Declaration of Independence.

When the Colonel Jeremiah Lee constructed his imposing home in Marblehead, Massachusetts in 1768, the drawing room was furnished in the Queen Anne style, fully fifty years after this type of furnishing had been popular in England. The clock and secretary in the Jeremiah Lee model interior are rare pieces of small scale furniture made of old burl walnut, exact replicas of old English pieces. Every drawer of the secretary opens and even the secret drawers are reproduced. Needlework in wood, gros-point and petit point, was extensively used for upholstery purposes and the so-called love seat was in fashion during the Queen Anne period. An upholstered love seat and two upholstered armchairs are used in the model. The one modern note is the material used to make the wine decanter and glasses placed on center table; the material is lucite.

On the eve of the Revolutionary War, the Adam style began to be seen in the colonies. Hostilities postponed any widespread effect until after the resumption of relations with England in 1783. The style was introduced in New England by Charles Bulfinch who found an apt follower in the Salem carver, Samuel McIntire. The Pierce Mansion of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, is believed to be the work of Charles Bulfinch. This model room shows the entrance hall of the Pierce mansion with a mahogany settee of Hepplewhite lines copied from the original piece placed in the curve of the stairway. The settee is decorated with the typical shield-back ascribed to George Hepplewhite. One of the first questions asked by visitors when they see this hallway is "Why is the center of the stairway painted black? Why aren't the stairs carpeted?" It was the fad to paint rather than carpet stairs during those years. This custom may have originated because of the widespread popularity of fragile needlepoint rugs which were not strong enough to stand constant wear and rarely if ever used on stairways.

The most accurately copied room is the bedroom from Oak Hill, Peabody, Massachusetts. Even the arrangement of the



furniture is almost identical as in the original. In the case of all other models, the spacing of windows and placement of decorations has been re-adapted inasmuch as these miniature interiors are three-sided and must give a balanced effect. The original of this room and two others from Oak Hill are now preserved in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

A second example of the work of Charles Bulfinch, Boston's outstanding architect of the early Federal period is the reproduction of the dining room in the home of Harrison Gray Otis, Boston, Massachusetts. The room is furnished with copies of many rare pieces including a needlework rug from the Art Institute of Chicago, candle sconces and a mirror from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, silver from London and Hepplewhite miniatures.

John Goddard's famous block-front secretary-cupboard has been copied for the model of the Waterman House parlor. In designing this secretary, Goddard used the shell, alternating between the Queen Anne convex and intaglio shells. In the American wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art is the original secretary from which this small model was drafted.

Without following any particular example or even a typical arrangement of windows and doors, the model of the living room of the Cape Cod cottage gives the flavor of these homes of the Cape fisher folk as they appeared during the first of the last century and in many instances, almost to the present era. Some of the smallest miniatures are among the decorations in this living room. An adult's teaset is matched piece by piece by a child's teaset which uses a tray made from a copper penny. One craftsman made both these sets. When the adult's set was finished, Mrs. Thorne commented on its excellence and mentioned she wished that it would be possible to make a set exactly like it, in scale, for a child. When the craftsman completed the child's set, a copper penny was pounded into the shape of a tray. Other diminutive objects in the room are the ship in a bottle on the mantel, the stamped envelope on the desk and a tiny bunch of keys hanging by the door leading into the garden. The table in this cottage is copied from an American variation of the gate-leg, known as the "butterfly" table. Instead of a gate-leg proper, this type of table has a ham-shaped flat board which upholds the hanging portions of the table.

A traditional New England Bedroom representing the style of 1750-1850 was reconstructed from this set of models. This interior answers one interesting question: in the absence of paneling and scarcity of wallpaper before the middle of the nineteenth century, how did the housewife relieve the bareness of plaster walls? Careful investigation of old houses revealed the solution hit upon by these housewives of another century—the stencil. The pattern used in this room was found in the Abner Goodall home in Marlborough, Massachusetts, on a wall surface back of an old cupboard where it had been hidden for years and preserved intact. The pattern dates probably from the first quarter of the nineteenth century, possibly earlier, though the facts that these patterns were traditional and the work of itinerant journeymen makes a precise date impossible.

Duncan Phyfe, Scotsman, landed in America in 1784 and by the middle of the last decade of the eighteenth century was well established in New York City, with an ever-increasing reputation. As the first and foremost adapter of Sheraton-esque designs, Duncan Phyfe was influenced, as was Sheraton, by the French Empire, so that Phyfe's style can be described as a hybrid Anglo-Empire style. His style of furnishing is exemplified in the model of a drawing room from Andalusia, Bensalem township, Pennsylvania. The combination bookcase and cupboard has pleated curtains hung on the inside of the glass doors. Books were expensive during this period and canny housewives concealed the partly empty shelves of their book-shelves with curtains.

The first of the two Victorian Rooms is a reproduction of the parlor in the brownstone front on 28 East 20th Street, New York City, the former home of Theodore Roosevelt. Furnishing the room is the fashionable Belter furniture, chairs, sofas and tables, which succeeded the classic Duncan Phyfe style. In one of the long front windows is a large rubber plant, a traditional decoration during true Victorian times.

One of the many historic homes reproduced is the drawing room from the Mount Pleasant home built for John Macpherson and later owned by Benedict Arnold. Furnishings in this room are typical of *Philadelphia Chippendale* developed by the expert cabinet makers and wood carvers of Philadelphia. This style may be distinguished from the true Chippendale by the strong cabriole legs with ball and claw feet, richly scrolled pediments, and the large size of the drawer handle and keyhole

plates. The Philadelphia made tables are the closest to the famous Chippendale type of any furniture made by William Savery and his group. A table of this description, pie-crust design, is among the furnishings of the Mount Pleasant drawing room model.

In the model of the great hall of the Miller's House of Millbach, Pennsylvania, the superstitions of the Pennsylvania Dutch have been interpreted in miniature. The gay colorful *hexes* (circular discs and stars) painted on furniture were derived from similar devices painted on the great red barns of these earnest folk in the belief that their grain and stock would be protected from the machinations of evil spirits. Birds and tulips were also used as motives for these decorations. In such homes, the walls were frequently hung with illuminated text, birth and marriage certificates. On the center table is a decorated glass, copied from an example of Stiegel glass owned by the Metropolitan Museum of New York. These German colonists were the first to develop glass and pottery making in the latter half of the eighteenth century. About 1765 Heinrich Stiegel settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and began the manufacture of this distinctive type of glassware.

The living room of the Shaker Community House (1800) illustrates a typical background of a highly individualized culture which emphasized an economy, directness and honesty of craftsmanship which was not without effect upon surrounding communities. There seems to have been no necessity for individual decisions in a Shaker Community. The leaders dictated suitable reactions for every conceivable situation. Even separate chairs were constructed for men and women. Four of these chairs are reproduced; two rung chairs for the women, one rung seats for the men.

Few, if any of the historical homes, as they now exist, contain any of their original furnishings. Models of these interiors were completed with furnishings copied from the type which in all probability adorned them during the days of their greatest glory. The selection of suitable furnishings was a tedious process requiring hours of research and consultation. There was no record to be found of the original furnishings in Gunston Hall, Fairfax County, Virginia, home of George Mason, known as the author of the Bill of Rights. As the taste for Chinese motifs was prevalent during the time when Gunston Hall was

completed, 1758, Chinese Chippendale furnishings were copied in miniature to decorate the interior.

The famous West Parlor of Mount Vernon, home of George and Martha Washington was reproduced and furnished with several authentic miniatures, Martha Washington's favorite silver tray and Charles Wilson Peale's famous portrait of Washington were copied for this interior. The rug is a reproduction of one of the French Aubusson carpets presented to George Washington. Most of the furnishings are of the Sheraton type; a so-called Martha Washington high back upholstered chair stands beside the mantel.

Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, third American President and founder of the University of Virginia, was also, according to Mrs. Thorne, an architect by avocation and inclination and she holds that architecture and its problems were among his chief interests throughout his life. A model designated as a *Jeffersonian House* gives evidence of Jefferson's interest in this field. The miniature banquet table is reproduced from one designed by this outstanding political philosopher. Two unusual ornaments are the mounted cameos, used as wall decorations; and the tiny robin perched on the bush outside the window.

The infinite care to small details is again expressed in the kitchen of the Governor's palace at Williamsburg, Virginia. On the table of this miniature room is what looks like a real cherry pie. The piecrust was mixed and baked; the cherries are red beads and the juice of the pie is red tinted glue.

A unique miniature in the drawing room of a typical Charleston house in South Carolina is the rent table. Around the outer edge of this circular, revolving table are a series of separate drawers for the records and payments of individual tenants on a plantation, hence the name "rent" table. The Chinese rug in this model was made from forty-four spools of thread containing one hundred yards each.

Many visitors can still remember the old double parlor which is constructed in miniature and designated as the house of a Georgia planter, about 1850. The stereopticon and shell flowers under bell glass are two familiar decorations on the

table of the main parlor. Placed in the bay windows is the old fashioned *chaperone* sofa which rarely fails to bring forth a titter from younger sightseers. The *chaperone* sofa derived its name from the prominent hump in the center of the seat which prevented the occupants from sitting next to each other.

The greatest surprise of all reproductions of famous homes is that showing the entrance hall from the Hermitage, the home of General Andrew Jackson. In the eyes of the aristocracy of the Atlantic Coast, "Old Hickory" became almost a symbol of the unruly democracy of the West. History holds his slight but energetic figure in our eyes as an uncouth but well meaning leader. As a matter of fact, General Jackson was one of the aristocracy of the South, a planter and landed proprietor with a passionate interest in the breeding of fine horses. Conclusive proof that he was a firm believer in the elegance of life proper to his station is the reproduction of the impressive entrance hall from his beloved home. The scenic wallpaper in the interior was applied in the same manner as real wallpaper. In this case, the design was painted on one large sheet, the sheet was cut in strips and the strips were pasted on the walls of the hallway.

The group of parlor, hall and dining room, titled "A House in 'Middletown' about 1890," reconstructs the background against which most people now admitting middle age passed memorable childhood days. Pointed Gothic windows, tortured Queen Anne furnishings and hints of oriental dreams mingled in friendly fashion with remnants of classic dignity. Mrs. Thorne admits that there is not a piece of furniture in the entire ensemble that has good lines. The age was that of knick-knacks with the *whatnot* and the cabinet and every other available space filled with family souvenirs and trophies of the Centennial Exposition. The Rogers group, the crayon enlargement and perhaps a hand-painted oil were art in those days and quantity was king. The miniature patent rocker near the oil reading lamp is what, in actual size, spelled comfort to the man of the house in the 1890's.

Three of the last four rooms in this final series of interiors are contemporary, depicting a dining room of a house in New Mexico, the living room of the George Washington Smith House in Santa Barbara, California and the hallway of a penthouse apartment, San Francisco, California.

The furniture in the New Mexican dining room is copied from pieces used in modern homes in that part of the country.

A tin shrine and candle sconces are Mexican designs, and the old silver, pottery and rugs were found in Mexico City.

George Washington Smith is a contemporary architect who has been eminently successful in the adaptation of the Spanish Colonial style to modern use. The furniture in this miniature room reproduces types characteristic of Spain from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. A tapestry on the walls was taken from a Viennese bag. Real electric wires with plugs lead from the electric lamps to the wall sockets.

The hallway of the penthouse apartment follows no actual example and it is not intended to offer any suggestions as to a proper approach to modern design. Its purpose is merely to indicate the general character of a modern room designed as an appropriate background for contemporary works of art and to point out what may well be called the international quality of design today. Miniature paintings by Jean Victor Hugo, Marie Laurencin, Amédée Ozenfant, and Fernand Léger are hung on the walls. Two bronze figures by John Storrs, the contemporary American sculptor, decorate the curtained window recesses on either side of a fireplace. Through the French doors is a view of the city of San Francisco including part of Treasure Island and a glimpse of the new bridge as seen with its sparkling lights at night.

Among the last of the four rooms is the living room from the Soberanes House in Monterey, California. This has been called the *Maine-to-Spain* room, illustrating an interesting mingling of New England tradition with what may be called native Spanish elements. Sun-dried adobe brick was used for walls three feet thick, and Victorian furniture brought in the holds of the clippers to soften the homesickness of the Yankee settlers was mixed with pieces of Spanish flavor. But the New Englanders objected to the tile floors. They brought with them their love of square dancing and accordingly built a wooden floor, over the tile floors, which was easier for dancing. As a final touch of authenticity, in the miniature room, the craftsman laying the floor gouged the boards as if they had been subjected to many years of merrymaking.

Scale presented no problem in the American series. A greater proportion of the pieces were made for the interiors in this last series than in either of the other two series. So many of the

objects in the first set of rooms were the result of years of collecting that there was bound to be some disparity in sizes. The perfect scale of the American rooms gives them a consistency not possessed to such a high degree in any other rooms of the two previous series.

On December 9, 1941, Mrs. Thorne announced that she was closing her workshop, that she would never again make miniature rooms. When she was asked if this was a concession to the psychology of a world in which things must always get bigger to be better, Mrs. Thorne said no. Her decision, came, a necessary one, when the draft took two of her best craftsmen. Mrs. Thorne is to be commended for the more than ten years' employment she gave to retired cabinet makers and wood carvers who were considered too old to find other employment. These men, each with experience of over forty and forty-five years, are responsible for the excellence of these reproductions. During 1942 all three series were on tour, arrangements for their showing having been made months in advance by the Art Institute of Chicago. It is the desire of this institution to show the room in localities where they have not been seen so that Americans unable to travel throughout their own country or to Europe because of present conditions may see historic interiors typical of past centuries, homes lived in by early Americans and famous presidents.

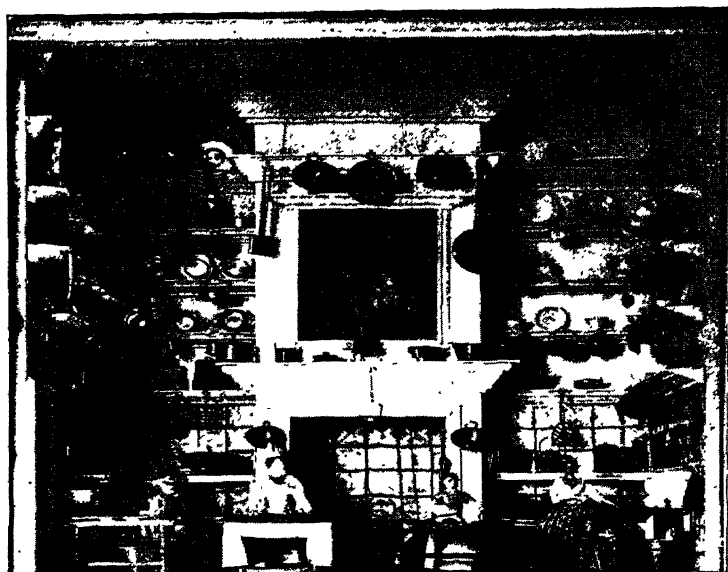
**R O O M S**  
**from the**  
**D O L L S ' H O U S E**  
**of**  
**Princess Augusta Dorothea,**  
**Schwarzburg - Arnstadt,**  
**1716 - 1751**



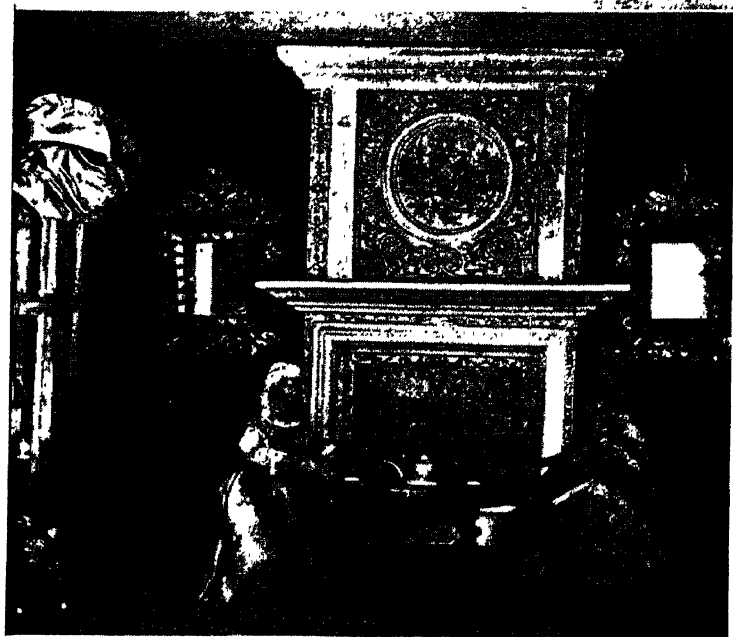


*Court Theatre.*

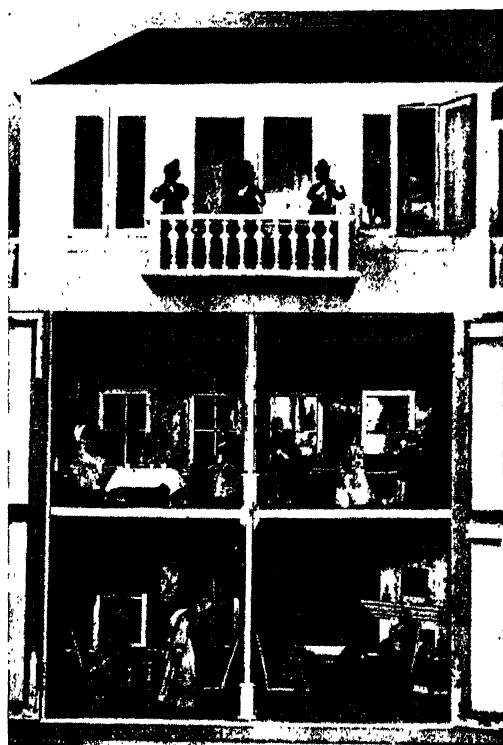




*A School in the Ursuline Convent.*







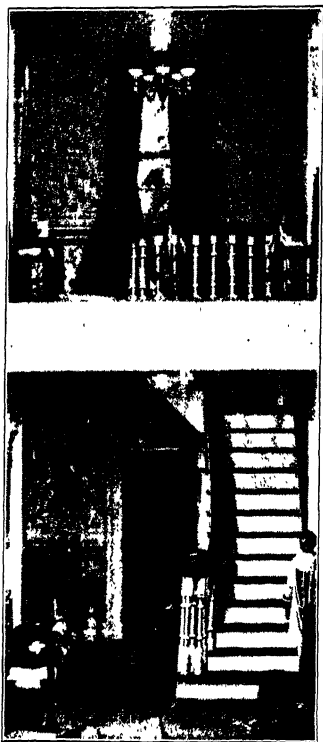


## Chapter XII

### *Dolls' Houses*

For centuries adults have invented excuses so that they may enjoy children's toys. Every year when model trains are set around the Christmas tree, it is usually the father of the family who spends several hours "testing" the engines, cars, switches and tracks. Mothers whose daughters own dolls' houses are just as "helpful." Childish fingers cannot be expected to make draperies, rugs or bedspreads for the small rooms so the mother usually lends her more experienced hands to that task, enjoying every minute of it. Hundreds of years ago, adults were no different in their attitude toward their children's playthings. Toward the end of the sixteenth century, grownups became interested in the dolls' house or single room, which had long existed as a child's toy, pretending, however, that their interest in the models was promoted solely by their desire to provide amusement and instruction for the rising generation. Couldn't the children, while at play, easily learn all that was necessary for the building up of a well arranged household? But adults soon learned to acknowledge openly their own delight in them and in 1632 even the authorities of Augsburg could think of nothing more fitting as a present for that tough warrior king, Gustavus Adolphus, than an art cabinet containing, besides miniature specimens of dainty china and tiny musical instruments, automatic dolls, a peep-show and even a small falconry. The oldest German dolls' house of which there is any record was destroyed by fire in 1674, presented by Albrecht V of Bavaria to his little daughter in 1558. There were three floors, four doors on the outside walls and sixteen windows. But these old collections are minor when compared with the veritable town of dolls and houses created by the Princess Augusta Dorothea and her household in Schwarzburg-Arnstadt in the years between 1716 and 1751. Several large halls were necessary to house this enterprise which the Princess named "Mon Plaisir." Until 1936 there were still about eighty of these rooms and almost 500 dolls in existence. Originally the collection had comprised nineteen large cabinets with over one hundred dolls' rooms and almost a thousand dolls. Her most valuable assistants were two artistic Franciscans of Erfurt who carved the heads of the dolls in wax. The garments of the court cavaliers were probably made by the court tailors and

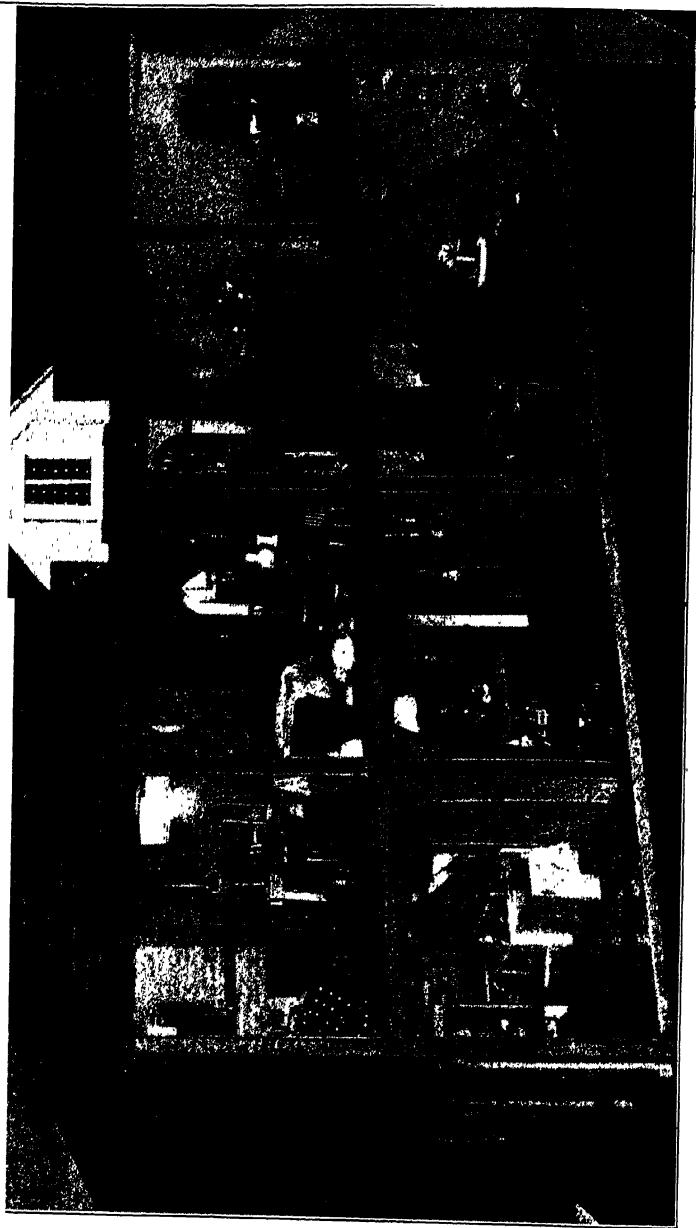




*Staircase of the Hughes dolls' house.*



*Full view of the Donnelly dolls' house kitchen.*



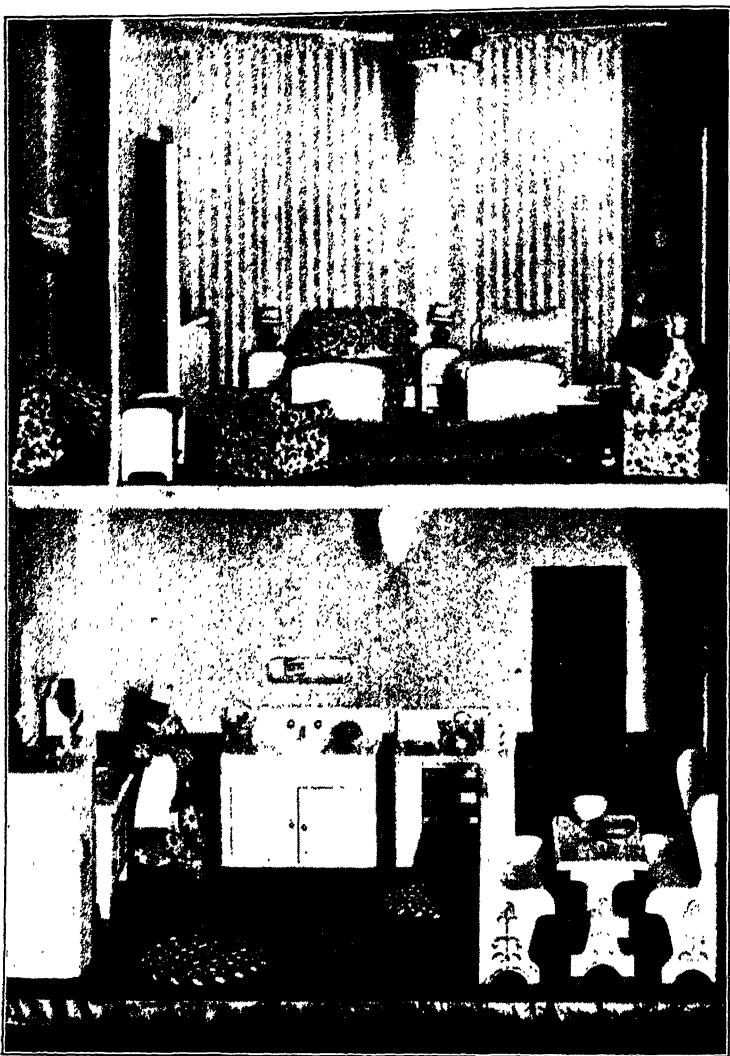
*Open view of Donnelly dolls' house.*

the young ladies of the court probably took care of the outfits of the lady dolls. Before the war, students of German life during the first half of the eighteenth century found these rooms and their small inhabitants an inexhaustible mine of information on the daily court life of that period. Each newly acquired piece of china, furniture, each embroidered fire screen used in the Princess' big household had to be represented in miniature for her rooms. Some of them showed the interior of the Palace, the Princess holding court, the court kitchen, the Princess having her portrait painted, the Princess at her embroidery frame or a reception at court. Several of the houses depicted a biblical tale, such as the Prodigal Son, a Church festival, the history of the Passion, and a study room in an Ursuline convent.

After the death of the Princess the houses were displayed at a nearby orphanage where they were accessible to the public. But in 1819 they were removed from public view, banished to the attic of the orphanage, and forgotten for fifty years before they were once more brought to light; their present whereabouts is not known.

One of the earliest miniature rooms on record in France was presented to the Duc de Maine in 1675. On the richly decorated grand sofa was seated a wax model of the Duke himself while close by stood M. de La Rochefoucauld, in whose hand were some copies of his latest verses, with other celebrated men of the day standing nearby. The collecting of miniatures became the vogue in seventeenth century France and a most appreciated gift was a dolls' house or a model room. For example, Cardinal Valette presented the sister of the Grand Condé, who became Duchesse de Longueville, with a doll and a small room furnished with bed, chairs, tables, accessories and a complete wardrobe. The furnishings of these early houses must have been exquisite, judging by the few examples which have come down to us. But as a general rule few European dolls' houses contain all of their original furniture and household implements. Exceptions to this rule were formerly exhibited in the German Museum at Munich, the German National Museum at Nuremberg, the Art and Industrial Museum in Berlin, and at the Victoria and Albert Museum in Kensington.

While the vogue lasted, small centers for manufacturing such houses sprung up on the continent and in England. Many were



*The bedroom and kitchen of a ten-room miniature dwelling, one of the educational projects of Cincinnati, Ohio, merchants. This tiny house was presented to the Cincinnati Children's Home. Besides being an example of community co-operation, it seems to be one of the first of its kind to have a central heating plant, with a coal furnace and modern stoker, including blackout shades and bomb-proof windows.*

made in Paris in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century as well as in Seine-et-Oise, Moselle and Haut-Rhine. This was when such toys were beginning to be made as articles of commerce and not exclusively as special orders when the finest craftsmanship alone would be employed. In England in the middle of the nineteenth century, houses were made "finished and unfinished for dolls of all stations of life . . . Suburban tenements for dolls of moderate means . . . Kitchens and single apartments for dolls of the lower classes . . . Capital town residences for dolls of high estates." Some of these establishments were already furnished according to estimates with a view to the convenience of the dolls of limited income; others could be fitted in a most expensive scale at the moment's notice from whole shelves of chairs and tables, sofas, bedsteads and upholstery.

An interesting early English dolls' house is that presented by Queen Anne to Ann Sharp, daughter of John Sharp, Archbishop of York. Ann Sharp was born in 1691 and received the gift from the Queen early in her childhood. Many enlightening facts about manners and customs in a well ordered household in the earliest days of the eighteenth century have been learned from the Sharp Dolls' House. All the furnishings and the costumes of the dolls were copied from those in fashion at the time the house was constructed. The upper left room was the lady's chamber containing a curtained and canopied bed, blankets made of lamb's wool, an elaborate dressing table, a Vauxhall glass mirror, and room accessories of blue and white Chinese vases and bottles, following the fashion of the times. The dwellers of the house were My Lord Rochett, his lady, family and servants, identified by written slips of paper attached to their dress.

On the wall of milady's dressing room was placed a framed wax bust of Mother Shipton, the Yorkshire witch, said to have been born in 1486. She made sensational prophecies concerning Cardinal Wolsey and was believed in by all classes. Hanging from the ceiling of this room was an elaborately carved cedar or limewood chandelier with sconces for eighteen candles enclosed in a glass globe with walnut attachment. This piece alone was an exhibition of the skill and infinite care of the workmen of the period, and compares favorably with the Moore chandelier, although this piece had no precious stones. Beneath the chandelier on a center table rests an alabaster teaset similar in shape to one formerly exhibited in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The next room was the nursery with a more magnificent bed than in Lady Rochett's room. The curtains, valance and canopy were of green silk embroidered in colors and silver thread and edged with silver lace. A wax baby was placed inside a walnut cradle, the cradle ornamented with fretwork in ivory. In the nursery was a dolls' house for the imaginary children, cardboard, and furnished with a grandfather's clock, flaptable, footstools, dressing tables, kitchen stove, dresser and many other articles. In the days of Queen Anne this miniature of a miniature may have been considered unusual. Two well known modern houses contain the same features; Sir Nevile's *Titania's Palace* and the dolls' house of Queen Mary.

Under the nursery was the kitchen with a sucking pig roasting on the spit and a plum pudding boiling in a covered pot over the fire. A roast sucking pig was a favorite second course with the elite in the days of good Queen Anne. One interesting utensil kept in the kitchen was a pewter blending cup with a pierced openwork handle. This object is a survival piece of surgery of those days and is rarely found in miniature although many examples may be found in full sized specimens in collections of antique silver. This miniature bleeding cup was one of the utensils kept in the kitchen of the Sharp dolls' house.

In the dining hall the absence of many mugs indicated that the tankard or mug was passed around and used by all. In the drawing room hangs a miniature of Queen Anne painted on the back of an old playing card, the nine of diamonds. (In one of Mrs. Thorne's Queen Anne drawing rooms, the English countryside scene placed over the mantel is also painted on an old playing card.) The early mahogany Chippendale chair found in this room was undoubtedly placed there by a child of Ann Sharp, for mahogany, said to have been discovered in 1597 by a carpenter on board one of Sir Walter Raleigh's ships, was not in common use in the days of Queen Anne. All other chairs and stools in the house were of walnut.

The most elaborately costumed figure was Lord Rochett, magnificent in rose-pink satin trimmed with silver lace, silk stockings, black buckled shoes and a bag wig. The bag wig is so called because it was the fashion in those days for gentlemen to tie up their white wigs in black silk bags at the nape of the neck.

In the butler's pantry, under the table in a flat basket of plaited straw was a deck of miniature cards inscribed, "Cards of the Cries of London, Aesop's Fables and Emblems of Love," sold at the Grotto Toy Shop, Saint Paul's Churchyard.

The oldest piece of silver in the house was a tray and snuffers hall marked 1686. Including the handle, the tray was three and one-eighth inches; the snuffers and handle were two inches long.

The famed Queen Victoria of England had her own dolls' house and was so interested in miniatures that she constructed a small bazaar stall fourteen inches long, shelves and counters



*Full view of the Donnelly dolls' house bathroom.*



decorated with purses, beaded bags, shoes and other apparel. But the most famous of all English dolls' houses is Queen Mary's built on the scale of one inch to one foot and presented in 1924 to Her Majesty as a token or symbol of national goodwill realized through the generous workmanship of many expert hands. The architect, Sir Edwin Lutyens, designed the house to outlast the makers, to carry on into a future and a different world the pattern of English life in the 1920's. It was a serious attempt to express the age and to show forth in dwarf proportions the life England knew in that decade. The house is one hundred inches long from north to south fronts, sixty-two inches from east to west. It stands on a base 116x72 inches and 39 inches high. At the west end of the base a flap falls disclosing a garage with six motor cars, an inspection pit and all accessories for repairing the cars. Three of the cars, all English makes, are a Lancaster, Rolls-Royce and Sunbeam, each weighing an average of four pounds. It has been estimated that one gallon of gasoline would last 20,000 miles in their motors, and the tires would never wear out. The exterior of the House is wood carved and pointed to indicate Portland stone. On the parapet are statues and vases of lead, the work of Sir George Trampton. At the four corners stand the patron saints of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.



*Corner of the bedroom of the Agatha Ray dolls' house.*

In no other dolls' house or period room is the quality of workmanship as fine as that in Queen Mary's. This is easily understood when it is remembered that only the finest craftsmen and artists created furnishings for it. The same problems were encountered in the matter of scale. For example, the matter of the steel cable on the elevator in the house was at first a stumbling block. A cable one-twelfth the size of a regular elevator cable was too rigid, so fishing wire was substituted. Clothes, bedding and other linens, though beautifully made of the finest materials, appear as if they had been starched when made from ordinary goods. The solution was to weave finer materials and spray them with a fixative. Many of the workmen agreed that it would have been easier to build a second Crystal Palace and fill it with works of art and other objects of great bulk than to complete in such perfect detail and proportion a Palace and its contents on the scale of the Queen's Dolls' House. Coats of paint had to be reduced to one-twelfth the thickness; pipes had to be made slightly larger so that water would run through them.

In the main entrance hall rises the grand staircase. Around the hall are figures in armor standing on a floor of white marble and lapis lazuli in a neat pattern of squares and diamonds.

In the bedroom of the Princess Royal, Sir Edwin, with an eye to detail placed a real pea under the mattress. It was impossible to obtain a pea in scale and one had to be specially ground under a microscope. From this room is a connecting door to the Queen's sitting room, which in turn leads to the night nursery. The cradle is made of unpolished apple wood inlaid and bound with silver, the interior is of ivory and the hood is surmounted by the Prince of Wales's coronet and feathers in ivory.

The walls of the day nursery are decorated by fantastic fairy tale paintings done by Edmund Dulac. To entertain the royal children there is a toy theater, a gramophone, a cottage piano and two volumes of nursery rhymes set to microscopic music. A cupboard is the storage space for additional toys such as soldiers, a sedan chair, and a Dutch cradle.

Sir William Orpen's miniature paintings of King George V and Queen Mary are hung in the saloon; they were his first attempts in the miniature field. Here are two pianos, a grand and an upright, probably the two finest musical instruments con-

structed on a small scale. They have real sound-boards, cast steel frames, strings and hammers and have been numbered and recorded in the maker's books, Messrs. Broadwood, along with every instrument this firm has ever made. A veritable library of music is found in the saloon. Some fifty volumes of music by contemporary British composers are bound in leather books little more than one inch square, decorated with Her Majesty's monogram. Photographed and reduced from original published music, each volume is signed by the composer, Eugene Goossens, Alfred Bax, Edgar Bainton, Edward German and many others.

The dining room is decorated in the manner of Grinling Gibbons with bands of flowers and fruit carved in limewood picked out with gold. The walls are filled with many small portraits of members of the royal family and the Prince of Wales' favorite hunter. In the center of the room is a complete set dinner table with formal dinner service, several small wine glasses at each plate. In the basement of the house is the cellar where the wine is stored. The cellar book lists five dozen each of Veuve Clicquot 1906, Pommery 1915, L. Roederer 1911, and G. H. Mumm 1911, also two dozen magnums of G. H. Mumm's "Cordon Rouge" and six varieties of port.

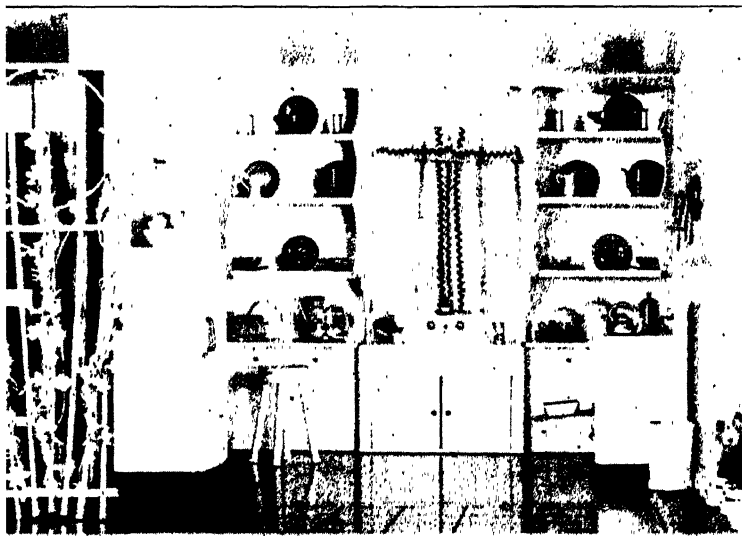
Twenty-five hundred wooden blocks were used to make the door in the kitchen. The doors are fitted with real locks. English ranges are placed on either side of the long kitchen, also a hot plate and a pastry oven, a weighing machine and a coffee grinder with a base barely six-sixteenths of an inch square. In the scullery are deep practical sinks, lead lined, with hot and cold running water.

Reproductions of the famous Crown Jewels were made and a strong room built in the dolls' house for their protection. The miniature safe combination works.

Since gardens are such a necessary adjunct to an Englishman's home, the designers of the dolls' house could not omit this feature but their problem was where to put it. It was finally decided to build a garden in a drawer eleven inches deep which, when not in use, could be slid underneath the house in the base. The landscaping of the garden was handled so that collapsible trees two feet high, may fall horizontally across the garden, missing the flowers and shrubs. It is the work of Miss

Beatrice Hindley who also made most of the metal flowers which decorate many of the rooms of *Titania's Palace*. Several typical garden implements on the scene, one of them a lawn mower three inches high. Searching closer, visitors have noticed small snails on the lawn and a thrush's nest filled with eggs. Flower and bush colorings were copied from the famous gardens at Kew; tree trunks are of solid metal, a solid branching effect achieved by using real twigs of dwarf growth. Games to amuse the inhabitants of the palace were also placed in the garden; archery sets complete with bows, arrows, targets and quiver, cricket, croquet, fishing, golf, and lawn tennis.

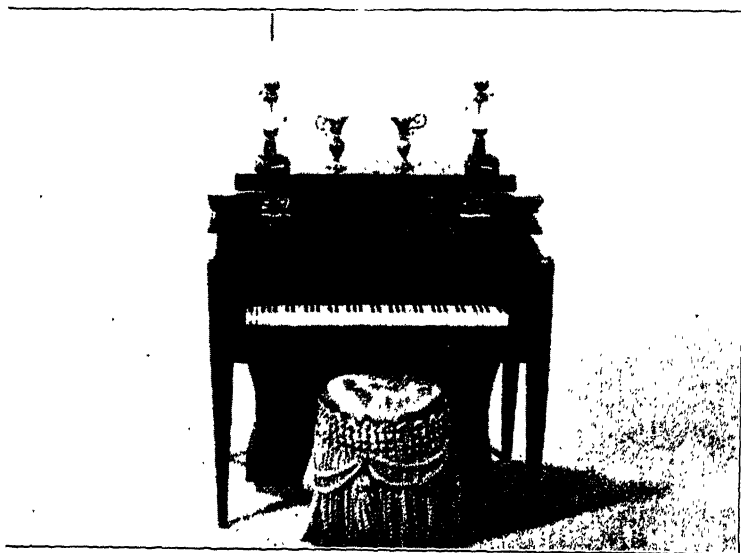
The library of the palace is panelled in walnut from floor to cornice with deeply recessed bookcases and like all other rooms is so perfect in all details of scale that a photograph of it gives the illusion of a regular sized room rather than a miniature. The ceiling was painted by a well known English artist, Walcot; the carpets and rugs were produced by the Gainsborough Weaving Company. Two carved cabinets contain over 700 drawings, water colors and prints, all by British artists most of whom are still living. None of these were miniaturists and few had ever painted on such a small scale. In this room is the finest collection of



*View of the Agatha Ray dolls' house kitchen.*

miniature books in Great Britain. Among them are the *Autobiography of Sir James M. Barrie*, *Ballad of the Three Horns*, by G. K. Chesterton; *The Princess and the Nightingale* by W. S. Maugham and *If Winter Comes* by A. S. M. Hutchinson. Since no well equipped library is without its reference books, there is also a *Who's Who*, measuring two and three-quarters by one and three-quarters inches and *Whitaker's Almanac* three-quarters by one half inch. England's famous magazines, *Punch*, *Country Life*, *The Field* and the *Saturday Review*, were reproduced in small scale. A miniature photograph album containing six photographs: Queen Victoria, King Edward, King George V, Queen Mary, the Prince of Wales (now Duke of Windsor) and Princess Mary; the words "The Royal Souvenir" are engraved on its gold and enameled cover. Several other volumes contain the reduced autographs of British Navy and Army men and British statesmen. Another book carries the autographs of outstanding theatrical personalities and is entitled *The Stage*.

One of the most elaborate rooms in the Queen's bedroom, completely furnished in walnut with gray silk hangings and a glass, yellow and coral ceiling against a painted black sky. Her enamelled toilet table is decorated by a mirror set in diamonds.



*Square piano from the Agatha Ray dolls' house.*

The Queen's bath is no less spectacular, with a ceiling the hue of emeralds and a mother of pearl floor, a bath of alabaster with silver taps. The Queen's sitting room on the top floor is done in Chinese taste using black lacquered furniture and walls of light brown painted by Edmund Dulac, using as a motif golden clouds and roses. The carpet in this room was copied from an ancient Chinese rug of the time of the Chien Lung Emperors.

By considering the unusual features of many of the early dolls' houses mentioned, it is possible to see how these English artists and craftsmen drew upon historical dolls' houses for much of their inspiration, and likewise it is also easy to see how later dolls' houses and palaces such as Mrs. Thorne's model rooms have profited by the experiments and findings of these Englishmen who constructed the Dolls' House for Queen Mary. Mrs. Thorne's workmen also have handled successfully the problems presented by draperies, upholstering, bedspreads and linens, although there has been more possibility for errors in the English made palace as it contains a linen room in which the shelves are lined with small blankets, sheets, towels, and other linens, yet none of the bundles is out of scale.

Until the beginning of the second World War, Queen Mary's Dolls' House was on exhibition in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Before London suffered severe bombing attacks, it was removed to a basement for safekeeping together with Queen Victoria's model rooms.

At Heaton Hall, in Manchester, there was an outstanding collection of dolls' houses and miniature objects, many of which were presented by Mrs. Mary Greg in 1922. These houses and objects cover a period of over three centuries but they are primarily English work of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, although some of the articles are of German, Dutch, French, Finnish, Russian, Mexican or Madeiran origin. The articles include furniture, pottery, glass, needlework, pictures, prints and books, apprentice's models, small models of ships and various types of vehicles. Some of the seventeenth century chairs still have their original cane seats; there is also a bedstead which still displays the original Jacobean woven hangings.

The Adam period dolls' house at Heaton Hall was made under the personal supervision of prominent architects of the period for the children of their clients and were not sold in shops.

Other houses originated in the period of Queen Anne, George II, George III, the time of Charles Dickens and later Victorian models.

Nineteenth century shops are also represented in this collection, a hat shop, a fish shop with fish modeled in wax and a green grocer's shop furnished with wax fruit modeled by Mrs. Greg. This is the same type of work as done by Mrs. Helen Cook of Joliet, Illinois.

These miniatures not only have great monetary value because of their age and rarity but what is more important they have educational value insofar as we may learn better the customs of the past. Hundreds of years from now the dolls' houses owned by present collectors will serve to interpret life of today.

For two and one half years, George S. Pond of Warren, Ohio, worked in constructing a miniature of Mount Vernon in which his daughter, Mrs. Raymond E. Hughes, later placed her collection of miniature furnishings. A complete set of architect's plans used for the original Washington mansion were secured and followed in every detail for the building of the exterior. The arrangement of rooms inside the house had to be altered so as to permit a full view of each room from the front. Thousands of individual pieces of wood were cut and fitted with exacting patience, just as each corresponding piece was fitted in the original Mount Vernon home. Each of these pieces, including more than eight thousand shingles alone, was shaped by hand, with the aid of no other tools than can be found in the average home, and each piece was put into place only after having been stained, polished and fitted to perfection.

The white balustrade around the roof of the main house is made of more than a thousand pieces, of which none are butted together, but all are either mortised or mitred. This balustrade, like the entire Mount Vernon model, is carried out to the exacting scale of one inch to one foot. The long veranda, with its graceful columns built up from wood blocks, the siding on the mansion cut in a check-work pattern, the bright green shutters which open and close, the glazed windows which raise and lower and the doors fitted with lock and keys are all to scale. The door paneling is built up of layers of wood, just as in regular size doors.

The copper spouting which carries rain from the roof of the house and loggias has been tested and is water-tight. The spouting and drain-pipes are made of segments cut to size according to the scale of the entire project and soldered together.

The hardwood floors of the interior are laid over soft pine boards which run at an angle; this feature cannot be seen, but it has been used by Mr. Pond in order to make his reproduction as nearly perfect as possible. Similarly, the outer walls are nailed to siding, which is in turn attached to studding that has been cut to scale and placed in exactly the correct position. Much of this invisible work could have been faked, with a great saving of time and labor to the builder, but he refused to depart from the correct plans in any detail unless absolutely unavoidable.

For exhibition purposes, glass panels have been installed across the front of the Mount Vernon model. Furnishings inside the house are on the same scale, one inch to the foot and the total of over two thousand separate objects, which came from all over the world, is the result of Mrs. Hughes' interest in miniatures. She began collecting, somewhat haphazardly, when she attended Wellesley College and soon found that objects on a small scale held more interest for her. As her collection grew, it was a natural step to want a fitting place to display them. Since most of her miniatures fell in the period from the last half of the eighteenth century to the early part of the nineteenth century, Washington's Mount Vernon home seemed the logical choice.

In the master bedroom in the upper right corner of the house is a canopied bed with a miniature bed warmer, similar to those used in Colonial days, standing against it. Directly below this bedroom is the drawing room in which George Washington often entertained personages that are now important in American history. The marble mantelpiece at the rear of this room bears the double keystone used in the original Washington house. The flowered needlepoint carpet, Mrs. Hughes' work, is a reproduction of a French tapestry carpet like those imported and used in Colonial days by the wealthy families, in preference to rugs made in America.

Under a glass cover on the table in the foreground of the drawing room is what has been called the smallest book in the world, *The Rose Garden of Omar Khayyam*, copyrighted in 1932 by Eben Frances Thompson and privately printed in Worces-



ter, Massachusetts. Next to the book is a miniature newspaper bearing the dateline, "Chicago, June 1, 1933," one of the hundred copies printed on a small press exhibited at the Century of Progress by the Goss Printing Press Company, Chicago.

On the top floor, directly to the left of the drawing room, is a sitting room furnished, among other objects, with a piano, an exact reproduction of the first one brought to this country. The book on top of the piano came from the dolls' house of one of the daughters of the last Czar of Russia. The etching on the right wall of the second floor is from the dolls' house of Queen Mary of England and is one of the prized possessions in Mrs. Hughes' Mount Vernon. It was purchased through a book dealer in Cleveland and Mrs. Hughes is convinced of its authenticity. It may have found its way to America through Christie's auction room in London as part of a War Relief Sale.

In the formal dining room is a tilt-top table, a replica of the one at Mount Vernon at which the Washington family customarily had tea in the afternoon. Both this table and a reproduction of the Washington four poster bed were made for Mrs. Hughes by the Tiny-toy Company in Providence, Rhode Island; both are part of this Company's regular miniature furniture reproductions.

On the left wall of the family dining room is a silhouette of a matador engaged in a bull fight. It was cut by hand from black paper by a Mexican artist and was presumably made by the same artist who cut all the silhouettes owned by Mr. Emanuel Karman.

Outside the main house, a loggia curves back to the detached kitchen which is combined with the servants' quarters. Mr. Pond has reproduced the wide expanse of lawn and a fountain. This fountain operates on a pint of water, the stream flowing in a continuous cycle by means of an electrically driven pump and produces a misty spray. Mrs. Hughes frequently changes the furniture in many of the rooms as she purchases new miniatures. Recently, sterling silver goblets were added to the dining table, a Bohemian decanter and glasses to the buffet, a silver Lazy Susan to the tilt top table in the dining room and several oil paintings to the walls.

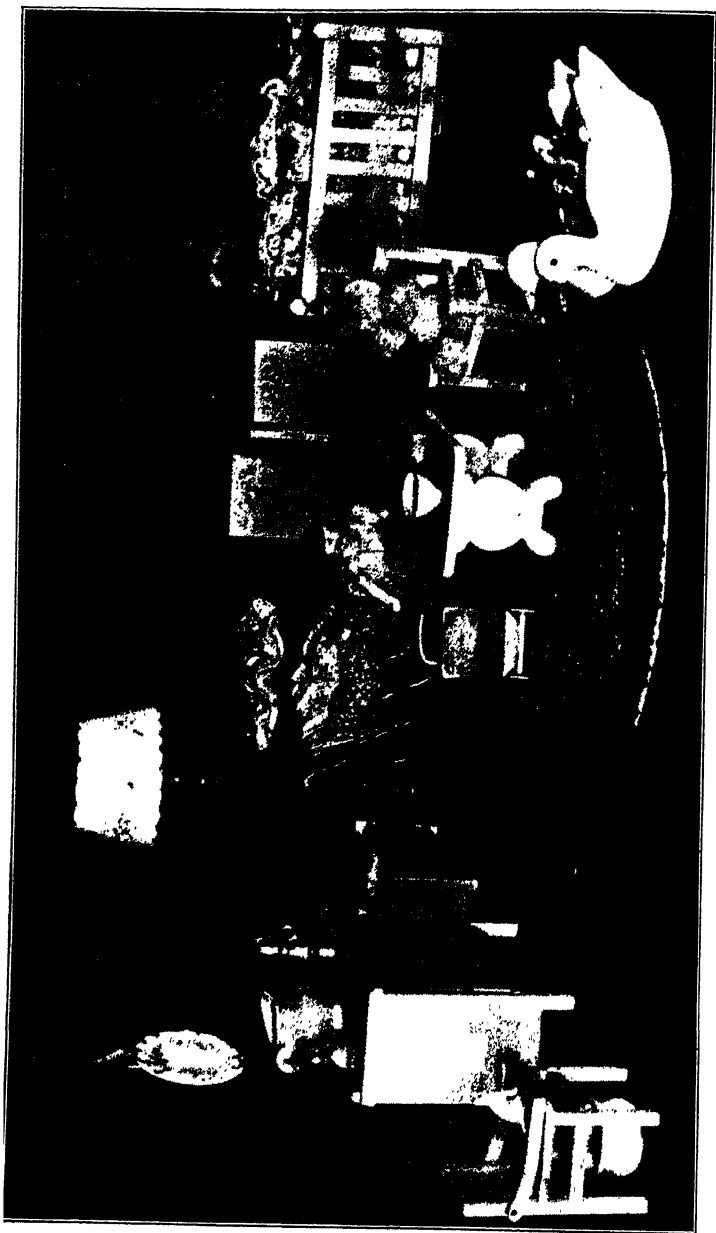
On rare occasions the entire exhibit has been removed from Mrs. Hughes' home for an outside display. In 1935 the Hughes'

Mount Vernon was shown at the Armory in Warren, Ohio, for the benefit of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Boys' band. But it is cumbersome to move since it is of standard house construction not made of removable pieces and the owner prefers to welcome visitors in her home. The glass enclosure within which the reproduction is displayed occupies a space of nine by thirteen feet, the mansion alone being seven feet across the front and about three feet deep. The distance from the ground level to the top of the eagle on the dome is slightly less than five feet.

Mrs. Sigmund Livingston of Highland Park, Illinois, has constructed four period rooms, furnishing them with miniature antiques from her collection. All her small rooms are recessed in one panelled end wall of her living room, using a method of lighting of the main models, ante-rooms and gardens similar to that employed in Mrs. Thorne's rooms. The only time when any of her miniatures were exhibited was in the spring of 1942, in Glencoe to aid a War Bond sales drive. They were placed in a store window with the caption: "These rooms portray the American way of living. Buy war bonds to protect such American homes." Mrs. Livingston has been a collector of miniatures all her life and has thousands of pieces, primarily antiques, many in silver and porcelain.

A St. Paul collector, Mrs. H. H. Ray, has two dolls' houses, both on the scale of one inch to the foot. Her first house was furnished with regular dolls' house furniture and homemade objects such as a dressing table made from a small box, a stool made of a spool, and perfume bottles from beads. Mrs. Ray decorates this house according to the seasons and each Christmas installs a small ornamented tree in the living room. Her second house, Victorian in architecture and furnishings, is more interesting to her because the exterior was made fifty years ago. After purchasing the dolls' house in Illinois, she took off the old wallpaper, several layers thick, and repapered all the rooms, using candy box paper with small designs. For this second model, Mrs. Ray also made lamps from odd beads. The chimneys on the lamps in the kitchen are made of medicine droppers cut to the proper size. Her next venture will be an early American dolls' house.

The Hobby Room in Mrs. Lenore Mason's home in Des Moines, Iowa, exhibits two miniature houses, an old general store and a bakery. Like Mrs. Ray's houses, one is modern and the



*Nursery in the Pfahl dolls' house*

other Victorian, on the scale of one inch to the foot, and both consisting of eleven rooms. The general store is four and a half inches long and not quite two inches high. It contains all the important features of a regular store of its type and age, a postoffice, a large coffee grinder, cracker barrel and jars of stick candy. Near the small stove is a checker board and chairs for the players, a typical feature of a regular small town general store. Both the bakery and the store are hand carved and all in one piece.

Although the objects owned by Mrs. Zoe Glassmire, Lawrence, Kansas, are not shown in a stationary dolls' house, her method of display comes within this field. When not on exhibition all her miniatures are kept in boxes within a small trunk. For display, the pieces are set on a table in the manner of a village, a main house, a barn, church, servants' quarters, a shoe store, hat and drug store. All these small buildings contain proportionately small objects. For instance, when the frame church building is lifted, pews, the pulpit, statues, candles, the bible and the cross are all shown in their proper locations. Mrs. Glassmire prefers this method to keeping her miniatures on permanent display in a cabinet.

One of the few collectors to build her own dolls' house is Dr. Madelene M. Donnelly of Monroeville, Alabama. There are seven rooms in all with an open front showing a living room, dining room, and kitchen on the main floor and a bath, bedroom, sitting room and library on the top floor. The furnishings have come from all over the United States, two of the oldest pieces are small plates dug from the ruins of the San Francisco earthquake. Dr. Donnelly now hopes to build an Ante Bellum home to be furnished with some of her antique reproductions.

During his leisure time, Joseph Polak of Richmond, Indiana, has constructed a model of his own home made with matches, more than 20,000 in all, showing five rooms, bath, front and back porches and the attic. Each room has its own light and a miniature switchboard in the yard can turn on any or all lighting fixtures. Miniature furniture in each room exactly reproduces that in Mr. Polak's home. Even the davenport in the living room has removable cushions. The roof can be lifted off the building so that the furniture may be arranged.

Mrs. Robert G. Fiscus of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, does not yet have her dolls' house exterior but she has collected almost all the furniture necessary for an eighteenth century mansion. She has kept to the one inch scale as closely as possible, although occasionally purchasing objects larger or smaller because of their historical appeal. The majority of her miniatures were made abroad and purchased through importers; she has, however, also acquired many fine pieces made by craftsmen and artists in this country. For example, she has in French porcelain, (Limoges) hand decorated vases, plates, bowls, toilet sets and art objects, also a few Dresden pieces. Her Bristol Glass miniatures number between seventy-five and one hundred pieces, such as teasetts, pitchers, bottles and vases. Besides these, her collection includes a number of household objects, such as fire sets, sewing baskets, pictures, pipes, books and many kitchen utensils of copper, brass and pottery, all in the eighteenth century style.

The acquisition of Mrs. Fiscus' furniture has been much slower, being rare and more expensive. Her choicest pieces are some English antique carved pine mantel and mirror, a walnut bookcase and a walnut curio table.

Francis W. Kramer, in whose Chicago establishment were constructed the Thorne Miniature Rooms, was originally a printer. During his spare time, he built small displays to be placed around the base of his family Christmas tree. As he became more proficient, he attempted to construct model homes from architect's plans and met with success. Leaving the printing business to officially become a model builder, he contracted with the Hershey Company in Pennsylvania to make 30,000 miniature farms for milk chocolate displays throughout the country. After moving to Chicago, he began to work almost exclusively for Mrs. Thorne and since 1933 from his workshop on Chicago's west side have come ninety-five of the ninety-seven rooms in the three sets.

Working from architect's drawings supplied by Herbert Banse, he and his workmen built the rooms, did all the necessary wall and ceiling carving and furniture construction. As each room and furnishings were completed, they were sent to the Thorne workshop at Oak Street and Michigan Avenue where her artists completed the painting and Mrs. Thorne arranged the room ac-

cessories. When each model was completed the Kramer workmen were called in to tear down the room in sections and pack it for shipping. Since Mrs. Thorne has discontinued commissioning model rooms, Francis Kramer has resumed his work of constructing model displays for windows and furnishing equipment to amateur model builders of railroads, airplanes and boats.

Herman Abrams and his son Leonard, of Philadelphia, have constructed eight model rooms within five years for different private collectors. They have worked along the same plan as Mr. Kramer, constructing not only the exterior but also the furniture, metal work and accessories. For their own miniature collection, the Abrams reproduced the Millbach Room at the Philadelphia Art Museum, working from detailed drawings. All but six of the eighty pieces in the room were made in their workshop. A second room made for their collection was modern, showing a penthouse apartment. Within five years this team of father and son is now able to make completely furnished model rooms.

A 14 year old collector, Norman Letourneau of Fall River, Massachusetts, has constructed a cardboard cottage of 2,400 strips of board and outfitted the interior with toy furniture. Building more houses has been temporarily put aside in favor of constructing model airplanes.

Within the last year, Paul MacAlister, designer of interiors, has created miniature room kits with a floor plan board and seventy-six pieces of block furniture representing beds, bureaus, lamps, pianos and so on. These pieces are symbols making it possible for any home maker to try rearrangements of her furnishings, in miniature, before the regular size pieces are moved. These kits are not of interest to miniature collectors except as an example of another use of scale objects.



## Chapter XIII

### *Additions*

After the present manuscript was completed, information concerning additional collections was received. It was not possible to integrate this data since the volume was already on the press, hence, this additional material has been grouped in a final chapter.

Madeleine Aaron of Wichita, Kansas, author of text books on religious education, poems and nature articles, has a collection of over one thousand miniatures; among them is a group of glasses less than half an inch high filled with jellies and marmalades, all of which she made, covered with wax and fitted with metal lids. Her other pantry miniatures include a ketchup bottle; a half inch jar of peanut butter; an inch high glass jug of pure cider vinegar; a milk bottle made of milk glass; a half inch jar of sweet pickles; and a dozen cans of Heinz products all less than a half inch high.

Miss Aaron's kitchen miniatures feature an electric toaster, a one inch high bag of salt from the Great Salt Lake, Utah, as well as several varieties of kettles, skillets, muffin pans, potato mashers, biscuit cutters, a small wooden box of card recipes, a flour sifter, double boiler, and rolling pin, all made to scale.

As a cabinet for her miniature blown glass collection, Miss Aaron has refinished an old Seth Thomas mahogany clock, about two and one half feet high, lined it with velvet, and fitted it with glass shelves. Here she has displayed her clear glass goblets which measure less than one inch in height; a set of desert dishes and bowl; a salad bowl with glass fork and spoon; several water sets; and a variety of glass vases, jugs, bottles and flasks.

Her curio collection is housed in an Oriental lacquer box about four inches high which is fitted with many drawers. Within the drawers she keeps the carved ivory camels, sandalwood fans, painted grains of rice, Mexican needle dolls, pinhead oddities, dressed fleas and other miniature oddities found so frequently in collections of this type.



Like Mrs. Cooper, Miss Aaron also uses her collection of one hundred and twenty-five pitchers as a wall decoration. These small pitchers, collected from all over the world, are arranged on hanging shelves in her dining room.

The tiniest doll, in her collection of more than fifty, stands less than a quarter of an inch high; and her miniature footwear represents more than half a dozen foreign countries.

The drawers of the Aaron miniature mahogany highboy open to show postage stamp size valentines, a lady's miniature girdle and a pair of men's socks.

Another somewhat humorous portion of the Aaron miniatures is what the owner designates as the "Remembrances of Granpa." It is a tray containing an old-fashioned razor, horn-trimmed penknife, shaving mug, upper plate, little brown jug, and whisky flask. All that is needed to complete this tray is a pair of silver-rimmed eye glasses.

Miss Aaron keeps no catalog of her own possessions but she maintains files of newspaper and magazine clippings concerning miniatures owned by other collectors. The oldest miniature in her collection is an edition of the *Wichita Eagle*, the paper on which she started her career as a journalist.

One of the visitors to the 1942 Chicago Antiques Exposition and Hobby Fair was Mrs. Frederick Dent Hammons of Seattle, Washington, who is completing a dolls' house with rooms patterned after the rooms of her own house. She brought with her one of the Louis XVI chairs which had been made by a west coast craftsman for the living room of her dolls' house. Although the exterior of the house was designed by the architect who designed the house in which the Hammons live, Mrs. Hammons is supervising the construction of all the objects which will ornament the rooms. Many of the craftsmen on whom she relied to make fine pieces of furniture are now engaged in war work so that the house may not be completely furnished until these craftsmen are once again able to resume their peacetime crafts.

Through experience, Mrs. Hammons discovered that colors used in miniature rugs, upholstery and draperies must be of a softer hue to achieve an harmonious effect. When she first gath-

ered yarns for making petit point chair coverings and rugs, Mrs. Hammons tried to match exactly the colors she used in her own rooms. The results were not satisfactory; on a small scale, the colors seemed too intense. Improvising, she overcame this difficulty by selecting softer or grayer tones of the same color which she used in her own home. Like Mrs. Thorne, Mrs. Hammons has carefully watched the lighting of the room in her dolls' house. She has gone one step farther than Mrs. Thorne, however; each room in the Hammons dolls' house has its own light switch.

Another name has been added to the role of miniature circus owners known to the present writer: Hunter Jarreau and his brother, Rollo C. Jarreau, of Alexandria, Virginia. Although made to scale, when displayed, the circus fills the floor of an average sized room. The rolling stock of this unusual show were made at Tulsa, Oklahoma, by an oil man; the remainder of the paraphernalia was made by craftsmen in Alexandria.

The Public Library in San Antonio, Texas, is now displaying the collection of Circusiana owned by the late Harry Hertzberg. Part of this collection includes a miniature model of the Leska Brothers Circus, built to the scale of one half inch to the foot. This miniature circus was purchased by Mr. Hertzberg from Harry L. Thomas of Dallas, now personnel director of Cole Brothers Circus.

Into this unique model went the handiwork of Mr. Thomas and other builders of model circusiana, including Joe W. Taggart, George H. Barlow III, Frank Updegrove, Frank B. Smith and James O'Connor. The circus is set up on an elevated platform surrounded by an iron rail and enclosed with glass, the entire display painted circus red. The floor of the platform is prepared to resemble grass with gravel pathways and miniature palm trees. The model consists of a complete circus from the ticket wagons and grease joint on the midway to the horse tents, blacksmith shop and cookhouse in the backyard, including a menagerie of cages and lead stock and scores of wagons of all types used by the circus.

Five years ago, 90 year old, Frank J. Bailey of Vermontville, Michigan, started to carve what may be correctly labeled "memory" miniatures. His hobby is to make miniatures of objects as he remembers them. His first object was a reproduc-

tion of the log cabin in which his late wife lived when she first came to the state of Michigan. Since then he has made hundreds of similar log cabins, using reeds as his basic material. Some of his more recent miniatures include reproductions of the "House of Seven Gables" and his conception of a modern farm made from two thousand matches.

In his spare time, during the last three years, a Chicago hotel clerk, J. F. Johnson, has built an "agate" castle in miniature. Gem collectors will be interested in the more than one thousand Lake Superior agates which Mr. Johnson used in the walls of his castle. Other features will interest the miniature collector; the nineteen stained glass windows, each with outside shutters of walnut stained wood, and the roof and steeple made from more than four hundred imitation slate shingles.

Mr. Johnson uses period furniture to decorate the rooms, approximately sixty-five pieces in all, each carved from blocks of solid walnut. The pictures and plaques decorating the walls of the rooms are miniatures of originals hanging in museums in this country and abroad. "The Agate Castle" is one and one-half feet wide, four feet long, and three feet high, and weighs about one hundred and fifty pounds. Mr. Johnson used no intricate carpenter's tools to make this miniature; all work was done with an ordinary pocket knife.

A doctor in Waterville, Maine, Dr. J. Alfred Breard, has found use for depressors and applicators in the field of miniatures; he builds miniature churches and castles from these wooden articles. This hobby resulted from a suggestion made by Mrs. Breard that a walk be constructed around the bird house. Dr. Breard tried to construct the walk of matches but soon substituted applicators since they are made of birch and more easily worked.

During the Golden Gate Exposition, 1939-40, Florence Terry of the Yellow Bowl Studios exhibited her varieties of miniature clay flower arrangements and since that time hostesses on the west coast have been using her life-like decorations as center pieces for their tables. Miss Terry uses only a miniature pair of scissors and an orange stick as her tools; and, when possible, the real flowers as models. Frequently she works from photographs of unusual flower arrangements in gardens. During normal times, she uses a special clay imported from Paris. Since

the war, she has substituted an improved domestic variety. One of Miss Terry's flower arrangements is exhibited in Colleen Moore's Dolls' House.

Little Annette Avers of Portage, Wisconsin, is the envy of all her playmates, for several years ago her father presented her with an entire electric village as a Christmas present. The village occupies a stage, twelve feet by five feet and five feet high. All controls are operated by one main button which when it is pressed starts the cycle of mechanism. A concealed phonograph plays "In a Monastery Garden," a car drives up to a house, toots the horn, a boat whistles and chugs its way across the lake, the sun sinks behind a mountain in the distance, cowbells jingle and the cattle low. The sound of a plane is heard as it glides into the airport. Night falls and the stars and moon take their place in the sky. Lights begin to appear in the houses in the village. The miniature church lights up, the bell rings and the choir can be heard singing inside. A train whistles and rushes out of a tunnel, stopping at a block signal. Soon it clears, the road gates descend and a watchman swings a red lantern as the train passes. Winding in and out, operating its own switches, the train finally pulls into the depot and stops, just as the rooster on a fence crows, heralding a new day. Now, up goes the flag on the flag pole, a plane roars in a take-off from the airport, the music comes up to full volume, and the curtain slowly closes. All this at the touch of one button. Ten small motors, electric magnets, electric drums, vibrators, radio speakers, transformers, and miles of wire make this panorama possible.

The Avers family was proud when Robert Ripley wrote, asking to use the village in his Odditorium. But this was impossible, owing to the fact that the village is permanently constructed in one entire unit and cannot be moved from the house.

Mrs. Lon S. Cooper's fine collection of miniature pitchers is discussed in the section concerning that phase of miniature collecting. Since that portion of the manuscript was completed, Mrs. Cooper has sent more details which could not be incorporated with the original story but are presented here.

Soon after the second World War began, Mexican manufacturers began to supply the American market with glassware, potters and novelties in the absence of European and Oriental

imports. Many of their glass pitchers have been copied from Italian and American clay pitchers but their molds are so poor and their glass so full of bubbles and impurities that their crudeness adds to their beauty and sets them apart. Mexican workers have had little or no success trying to copy Venetian red glass; most of their glass comes in a natural aquamarine shade.

The French miniature pitchers imported during the past ten years are more delicate than the Italian or German ware but they do not compare favorably with the large pieces of French china or pottery. French craftsmen have failed to put the same detail and workmanship into their miniature pitchers that has identified other pieces of French art. One of the few exceptions is the LaMouge porcelain which were made many years ago and duplicate the same delicate designs and figures that grace the large pitchers and vases.

The Japanese have probably supplied more miniature pitchers to the United States than any other foreign country but they are usually cheap and exhibit little workmanship. The Japanese have attempted unsuccessfully to copy distinctive pottery such as Wedgwood, Doulton, and other English pitchers as well as French, German, Italian and Dutch designs. The majority of Japanese pitchers are of the cast variety but their clay is poor which makes it necessary to cast them heavy to withstand shipping and handling. They combine the color with the glaze which also tends to add to their clumsiness. The word *Japan* is usually stamped on top of the glass, making it easy for the unscrupulous dealer to remove. Collectors with experience, however, can identify a piece of Japanese clay without looking for the name.

Italian potters and glass blowers have contributed much to the art of miniature pitcher collecting. The most valuable are the Venetian glass pitchers which have never been successfully copied outside of Italy. A few spun copper and brass pitchers have been made by the Italians but they are of a light gauge metal with simple designs and in no way compare with the hand chased metal pitchers made by the Chinese.

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